

THE
PRIVATE LIFE
OF
LEWIS XV.

VOL. IV.

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IN WHICH ARE CONTAINED
THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS,
REMARKABLE OCCURRENCES,
AND ANECDOTES,
OF HIS REIGN.

— VIDEO MELIORA, PROBOQUE,
DETERIORA SEQUOR. Hor.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH
BY J.O. JUSTAMOND, F.R.S.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.
VOL. IV.

L O N D O N:
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M.DCC.LXXXI.

THE
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J. E. W. & S. W.

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THE
PRIVATE LIFE
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LEWIS XV.

LEWIS XV. tired to excess with an unfortunate war, equally repugnant to his inclinations as to age, which was advancing upon him, and still more so to his natural character of indolence and inactivity, was desirous of peace at any rate. But he was opposed by Marshal Belleisle, who had the ascendant over the Council, and over the Monarch. Fortunately this Minister died; and this circumstance prevented him from being regretted. We have already spoken much of him, but something still remains to be said. To the end of his life he had so great a share in the principal events of this reign, that we are under a necessity of giving a further account of him. He was too universal a man to be at the head of any particular profession; but if he were neither a Condé nor a Turenne in the art of war, nor an Oxenstiern or a Richelieu in politics, yet he

1761.

26 Jan.

1761.

did some memorable things in both these branches. Industry and activity were with him a substitute to extensive talents. We have already seen his exploits in the army. When he had got into the ministry, his first attention was to reform abuses, and to introduce a severe discipline in lieu of the remissness that had prevailed there. At least he shewed the necessity of such a reformation, as soon as he entered into the Council; and in the course of his administration, he published several useful regulations upon this matter. He wrote a letter in the King's name to all the Colonels, in which he threatened them with disgrace from his Majesty, and with being deprived of their regiments, if they continued any longer to connive at those clandestine arrangements between officers, known by the name of *Concordat*, by which venality stifled emulation, a sordid interest hurried those into retirement who were most capable of serving, and the promotions in the army were often put up to auction, to persons the least proper to fill them. By another custom, not less pernicious, young beardless men of rank or influence, who had not seen any service, used to obtain regiments. It was fixed, that no man could be promoted to the rank of Colonel, till he had served seven years*. The Marquis of Antichamp was the first who felt the effects of this regulation. In vain did Marshal Broglio, his relation, attempt to screen him from it; he could not succeed.

* By this regulation of the 29th of March, 1758, it was necessary that a military man, aspiring to the rank of Colonel, should have been at least five years a Captain; and no man could become a Captain till he had served at least two years as Ensign, Cornet, or Lieutenant.

Luxury,

Luxury, which is ever suppressed, and ever reviving again, in camps, and which is the consequence of the generous and lively character that animates the French nation, and inclines them to prodigality, was now carried to an excess insupportable to them, and troublesome to the army. The Marshal made a sumptuary law, ordering the equipages and table of the officers to be reduced during the war, and in the campaigns; and the military men had no longer the pretence of saying they were ruined in the service. The year following a second law was issued, more strict and more particular, which forbade the using of silver plates or dishes. He also caused M. Berryer to publish a similar law in his marine department, to regulate the table of the Captains of ships, and other officers of the King's navy; but which was not carried into execution, from the usual want of discipline in that branch of the service.

Gaming, the effect of the idleness prevailing in camps, being a continual source of quarrels and ruin among the military, in order to restrain the cupidity of those who are unfortunately too much tormented with this passion, and especially to disappoint the industrious activity of the sharpers it is apt to create, Marshal Belleisle engaged the tribunal of the Marshals of France to give out an ordonnance, by which it was decreed, that no applications could be made to their tribunal, for gaming debts exceeding the sum of 1000 livres*. It was forbidden to all gentlemen and military persons, under pain of imprisonment, and upon their word of honour, to play for any thing above that sum; and it was ordered to all those who had

* Upwards of forty-one pounds,

1761.

March;
1757.

3 June;
1758.

6 May,
1760.

1761.

any demands to make, to specify them all in the same petition, signifying the cause of the debts of honour, and other engagements required to be fulfilled.

21 July,
1759.

In calling back the officers to the simplicity of conquering nations, the Marshal did not fail to endeavour to prevent them from being ashamed of their uniform. He even regulated the uniform for the General Officers, and they were all obliged to wear it as their best dress. As for the rest, the pay and subsistence of the soldiers was increased, the appointments of each superior in command were increased at every step he rose; and he instituted the order of Military Merit, in favour of those Officers of the King's troops, who, born in a Protestant country, could not be admitted into the order of Saint Lewis, on account of their religion. The Prince of Nassau Saarbruck, and Baron Wurmser, were the first received into it, the one *Grand-Croix*, the other *Commandeur*.

26 Feb.
1757.

In a word, we owe to this Minister nearly all the changes effected in the administration of the war department, since the retreat of Count d'Argenson; to which changes he contributed by suggestions, before he was directly concerned in them. Among others, we owe to him the ordonnance, signifying, that in future each battalion of infantry should be provided with a piece of canon, according to the Swedish custom, and that one Serjeant and three privates should be appointed to manage it.

It has been seen by the anecdote of the Marquis d'Autichamp, that Marshal Belleisle did not want firmness. Count Lenoncourt, Colonel of a regiment bearing his name, having quitted the army without leave, and come to Paris, he wrote him word that
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1761.

the King had superseded him. The Courts Martial holden upon the volunteers of Liege, and the regiment of Piedmont, did honour to his inflexible severity. The officers of the first were broken. They had agreed among themselves no longer to pay their duty to M. de Melfort, their Colonel, who wanted to introduce into his regiment the new discipline, in imitation of that of the Prussian troops. One single officer had refused to agree to this resolution; upon which they had insulted him; and, being assembled, by order of the General, to make apologies to him, several shots fired at once against this unhappy victim of the spirit of the corps, had given rise to an inquest concerning this murder. The perpetrators of it having remained concealed, in default of particular justice, it was necessary to exercise a general one.

The conduct of the officers of the regiment of Piedmont had been still more atrocious. A son of the famous Captain of a privateer of Marseilles, known under the name of Roux de Corse, was in that corps. As he was very rich, he often lent money to his comrades. They abused his easy temper, and, although they did not return him the monies they had borrowed, they expected that he should still continue lending. His patience was at length tired out. One night he was found murdered in his tent. There could not be the least doubt, but that this was the effect of some abominable plot. Three Captains were condemned to the rack for non-appearance, and forty-five more to be broken, degraded from bearing arms, and from Nobility, thrown into prison, &c. The Marquis of Esparbes, the Colonel, had been condemned, by his sentence, to imprisonment

1761.

prisonment for twenty years and a day. His wife, being of Madame de Pompadour's suite, obtained her husband's pardon, who preserved the rank of Colonel in chief, but without the right of appointing to the vacancies, which was given to M. de Surville, made second Colonel of the regiment. Favour thus frequently eluded the patriotic zeal of the Marshal, who, being a man, was not without his passions. Ambition was the strongest of them; and the desire of maintaining himself at the head of affairs, often obliged him to submit to the inclinations, the injustice, and the caprices of the favourite.

One anecdote, injurious to the Marshal's memory, but which the impartiality of history will not allow us to omit, we find recorded in the historical eulogium of M. de la Valliere, pronounced publicly at the Academy of Sciences, by M. de Fourchy, the Secretary*. This Minister, whether from a desire of innovating, or from thinking the matter more useful in the present circumstances, or from some Court intrigue, and to gratify a particular passion, had a desire to separate the corps of artillery from that of engineers, which had been united by Count d'Argenson, for the good of the service that required it. When he had laid his plan before Lewis XV. suspecting that M. de la Valliere, in whose capacity the King had great confidence, would be consulted, he apprized that General Officer of the matter, and promised him that he would immediately obtain the red riband for him, and soon after the *Grand-croix*, if he would give an opinion conformable to his. This great Officer of artillery remained inflexible, and answered, that

* This eulogium has been read at the Easter meeting, the 17th April, 1779.

his

his mode of thinking being diametrically opposite to that of the Minister, he could not conceal it, if his Majesty should do him the honour to ask him any questions. The separation was not the less effected.

1761.

5 May,
1758.

In 1755, when it was discussed, whether a war should be commenced, or whether peace should be maintained, Marshal Belleisle was of the latter opinion. It seemed astonishing, that a man who had been eager for military action all his life—who had for no reason engaged France in a quarrel, in which she did not take either the most equitable or most noble side of the question—should display so great a share of moderation, when it became necessary to repel the insults of a violent and perfidious aggressor. The fact is, that he then perceived himself too much advanced in years to command the army, and was unwilling that others should acquire a glory which he could not partake. When he became Minister, he altered his opinion: and was severely punished in the loss of what was most dear to him. The Count de Gisors, his only son, a young warrior of the greatest hopes—who had lived too short a time to render his name illustrious, but long enough to make himself known and regretted—was mortally wounded at the battle of Crevelt, fighting at the head of the carabineers, whom he commanded. The manly and rigid education his father had given him, had been very successful, and had made an accomplished young Nobleman of him. He was lamented even by the enemy; and the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick, who had taken him prisoner, did not leave him 'till he had breathed his last.

23 June,
1758.

The ambition of the Marshal, as it made this stroke

1761.

the more sensible to him, so it likewise procured his relief. The tumult of affairs made a diversion from his grief, and those who did not see him in his family, judged that he had no feeling.

1759.

The end of his career was disturbed by another cause of chagrin. The letters he had written to Marshal Contades were taken by the enemy. Prince Ferdinand, in publishing them, availed himself of the rights of war to disclose the Marshal's plans, increase, if possible, the hatred of the enemies of France, alienate the neutral powers from her, and foment the jealousy and misunderstanding between the Generals. In these letters—informed by his own experience that the French could not long keep the conquests gained by their impetuosity—in order to reap at least some advantage from them, by preventing the enemy from establishing themselves there, he ordered, that every thing should be plundered, sacked, laid waste, or burnt. This mode of carrying on the war, so contrary to the faith and generosity of the nation, seemed odious and abominable; and recalled the memory of the horrible war of the Palatinate. The Palatine Minister, and the Court of Cologne, piqued at several insulting strokes they found in the intercepted correspondence, complained of the expressions made use of against them, and of their being suspected to favour the allies. In a word, several principal officers in the French army, who were spoken of disrespectfully, and were already little attached to the Marshal, vowed a secret hatred against him. They contributed the more effectually to thwart his operations, and afterwards imputed to him their faults, or the mistakes of the General.

Eager of every kind of glory, the Marshal was also

also desirous of being a member of the French Academy; as if the obtaining of a seat there were sufficient to partake of immortality, which is the device of the Company: he had not the least pretensions to be admitted; his stile, as well as his language, was dry and careless, and he never possessed the enthusiasm of literature sufficiently to protect those who cultivated it.

1761.

Having entered into the ministry at a time when discord still prevailed, though more secretly, in the Church, he conducted himself with dexterity between the two parties, and contrived to interfere as little as possible with their quarrels. Policy attached him to the Jesuits; he had intrusted the early part of his son's education to them, and he used every year to retire at the noviciate. But being nephew to Father Fouquet, one of the ornaments of the Fathers of the Oratory, he was secretly inclined to the Jansenists, and had a much higher opinion of them.

Such was this man, so envied and so fortunate with respect to the enjoyments of ambition, but the most unhappy of mankind in his domestic concerns, for, after having been at once a husband, a brother, and a father, he was the only remains of his family, which was entirely buried in the grave along with him. In his last moments he experienced another cause of chagrin, in being witness to the rising glory of the man whom he most detested.

26 Jan.
1761.

This was the Duke of Choiseul, who, being Minister for foreign affairs, persuaded the King, that, in order to give more weight to his negotiations, it was necessary he should also be Minister for the war department. He had already subdued the favourite, and soon enslaved the Monarch. He immediately entered

1761. entered into his views, so much the more readily, as we have before observed, that he was better calculated for intrigue than for military operations.

25 Oct.
1760.

He could scarce have met with circumstances more favourable. George II. was just dead; the Prince of Wales, his grandson, was a young Prince of a mild and quiet disposition. Lord Bute, his and his mother's favourite, being entered into the Council, with his creatures, must of necessity not only disapprove the German war, but also be more inclined to a peace, even though not adequate to the successes of England, than to burthen himself with the care and conduct of an embarrassing war. In a word, we almost always see a succeeding reign act in contradiction to the system and measures of the former. It was therefore readily to be presumed, that overtures of reconciliation on the part of France would be attended to; and, after having regulated every thing that concerned the preliminaries and accessories of such a step, M. de Bussy was sent to London, the same who had already negotiated there in 1755, and who, being deformed, had acquired the surname of Bussy-Ragotin, to distinguish him from Bussy of India, called Bussy-Butin, on account of his extreme opulence—of whom we shall have occasion to speak hereafter—and from the famous Bussy-Rabutin, that amiable Courtier of the Court of Lewis XIV. whose name will be more immortal than that of the other two.

8 May,
1755.

The object of the Duke of Choiseul, who already began to deceive the English, was less, at this instant, to make a peace—which would certainly have been very humiliating—than to gain time to bring forward a negotiation, which he was meditating and digesting in
silence,

1761.

silence, and upon which he founded the greatest expectations. Besides, he wished to be thoroughly acquainted with the spirit of the new Court; and he had chosen the spy the most proper for this purpose. The old Courtiers were not the dupes of this proceeding; they complained, that a meddling and artful person had been admitted, with whom they had been much dissatisfied in the reign of the late King; and particularly murmured, that he should be permitted to come and settle in London at the time of the Parliamentary elections. These declaimers agree, that they could not precisely specify the particular evil which resulted from the presence of so dangerous a negotiator; but they make no doubt, that he was the secret instigator of the motions of the Tories. From that period, according to these people, it was ventured openly to decry the men and the measures to which England owed its most signal successes. From that very period, parties were formed in favour of the proposals of the Court of Versailles, and Mr. Pitt's party evidently gave way to that of St. James's, in proportion to his firmness and to his sincerity in the course of the negotiation.

M. de Buffly having insidiously introduced some foreign objects, concerning the points of contest with Spain, as also the demands of the Empress Queen against the King of Prussia, Pitt rejected his proposals with haughtiness, pretending that France had not at any time the right of interfering in such disputes with his Catholic Majesty, and that it was an insult done to the honour of Great Britain, to suppose that she could be unfaithful to her engagements with her allies, and abandon the interests of Frederick. He foresaw, from that moment, that we were only

1761. only endeavouring to amuse him, in order to give time to Spain to form a connection with France, and to declare herself. He wished to detect the manoeuvres of the first of these powers; and for this purpose dispatched a courier to Lord Bristol, Ambassador from England to Madrid, with instructions to that Nobleman, to represent in the strongest manner to that Court, the surprize and indignation of his master, that an humbled enemy should presume to interfere with his Britannic Majesty, on the part of a Crown actually in amity with him. He summoned the Spanish Court to give a categorical answer, whether they meant to preserve or to break their neutrality. He recalled Mr. Stanley from Paris, who was negotiating there upon the same footing as M. de Buffly; to whom passports were given to return into his country; and he took measures for pursuing the war with vigour.

25 Aug,

The famous family-compact, negotiated so secretly, that nothing of it transpired till after it was signed, was soon made public. It contained twenty-eight articles. The Kings of France and Spain stipulated in it, as much for themselves as for the King of the Two Sicilies and the Infant Duke of Parma. They settled in it between them a perpetual alliance, agreeing for the future to consider every power as hostile that was an enemy to any one of them, and reciprocally guaranteeing to each other all their possessions, in whatever part of the world they might be, according to the state they should be in at the time when the three Crowns and the Duke of Parma should be at peace with the other powers; and obliging themselves to furnish the necessary succours for carrying on the war jointly, and not to make peace distinctly

1761.

distinctly from each other. This treaty likewise stipulated the suppression of the law of escheat in France, in favour of the subjects of the Kings of Spain and Sicily, and an express convention, that the subjects of the three Crowns should enjoy, in their respective dominions, the same rights, privileges, and exemptions as the natives, with respect to navigation and commerce, without a possibility of the other European powers being admitted into this family alliance, or of claiming for their subjects the same treatment in the kingdoms of the three Crowns.

This was the master-piece for which the Duke of Choiseul applauded himself; not that he expected any great success from this alliance, but in the hope that it would be the means of obtaining a less ignominious peace. He had another object in view, which was to cause a diversion, and, by increasing the forces of the enemies of England, to weaken and divide her own. This was, to oblige Portugal to declare itself: if that kingdom could have been detached from its natural ally, the latter would have been deprived of a considerable source of its riches: and if Portugal, on the contrary, persisted in its union with Great Britain, it was concluded, that a kingdom open on all sides might easily be subdued. The Minister began by securing to himself the most flattering rewards of his exertions. Beside the two departments for war and for foreign affairs, with which he was already intrusted, that of the navy was also given to him.

The business was to reinstate the navy; and M. Berryer, who had retained that department, was got rid of by granting him the seals, which the King had

13 Oct.

1761. had kept since the disgrace of M. de Machault. The Duke, however, had the moderation to resign part of the office for foreign affairs in favour of Count Choiseul, lately made Minister of State, and before that Ambassador at Vienna. Thus the department still remained in his family. Besides, he well knew the submission which his cousin, who had very bad health, was weak and indolent, would have to his will; and, in order to secure this the more effectually, he reserved to himself the most essential part of the business at this time, the correspondence with Spain and Portugal.

1762. His Catholic Majesty soon expressed his personal
18 Jan. satisfaction to the Duke, by sending him the order of the Golden Fleece. The Dauphin performed the ceremony of investing this Nobleman with it. A

4 March. little time after, he was appointed by the King Colonel General of the Swiss and Grisons; a post which he obtained from his Majesty upon the resignation of Count d'Eu, who held it before.

As soon as the Duke de Choiseul had acquired the marine department, he paid great attention to it, and seemed to endeavour to restore life and activity to that branch of administration. The business was to deceive Spain, by powerful efforts to re-establish it. The province of Languedoc, which had already testified its zeal for the King, in 1744, by offering to him the regiment of *Septimanie*, which it maintained at its own expence, gave another example of patriotism, more followed than the former. The States assembled at Montpellier, by an unanimous deliberation, determined to offer to his Majesty a 74 gun ship. This example was immediately imitated by the richest individuals in Paris, and by all the bodies of the State.

26 Nov.
1761.

1762.

State. Messrs. de Montmartel and de la Borde, the bankers of the Court; de Pange and de Boullogne, Paymasters-General of the army; Michel and le Maître, Paymasters of the artillery; Marquet and de Bourgade, contractors for provisions for the army, associated themselves, and entered into a subscription for the construction of an 80 gun ship. The Companies of Receivers General of finances, the Farmers General, the Paymasters of the annuities, the six Companies of Merchants of the city of Paris, the City of Paris itself, the States of Burgundy, the Administrators of the Posts of France, the Chamber of Commerce of Marseilles, and the States of Britany; all these several bodies engaged each of them to build a ship of the line, of greater or less force according to their respective abilities. The Minister, in giving this general impulse to a zeal so efficacious, announced the resources of the kingdom. But these resources could not immediately repair the loss of 37 ships of the line, and 56 frigates, sustained during this war*. They could not fill up the vacancy of twenty-five thousand sailors detained prisoners in England, in exchange of whom we had no more than twelve hundred to offer. In a word, they could not supply the kingdom with Officers and Generals, the best of whom had been killed in action, while there remained only such as had been disgraced by shameful defeats. One officer was, however, found, who executed a bold stroke, capable of inspiring Spain with a momentary confidence. The Chevalier de Ternay, a Captain of a ship, with a squadron of only two

* Eighteen ships of the line, and thirty-seven frigates, taken. Fourteen ships of the line, and eleven frigates, destroyed. Five ships of the line, and eight frigates, lost by accident.

ships

1762. ships of the line and two frigates *, arrived at the Bay des Taureaux, in the island of Newfoundland, and landed there with 1500 men, under the orders of Count Hauffonville; who seized upon the towns of St. John and Placentia, and upon the whole island; but this was no more than a gleam of success: before three months were elapsed, the English retook this conquest.

24 June.

18 Sept. Spain, which began the war with a navy quite fresh, and sufficiently numerous, when joined to the remains of that of France, to make head against the navy of England, was soon convinced of the fault she had committed, in having waited too long before she had engaged in the war, and of the still greater folly of having taken any part in it. In less than a year, she lost twelve ships of the line, the island of Cuba, Manilla, more than a hundred millions †, and could not even obtain the indemnity she had expected, from invading a neighbour, whose weakness was their only fault. This was renewing the fable of *the wolf and the lamb*. Portugal, supported by England—which from its tyrant had become its defender—after having given way to the first enterprises of Spain, stopped at length the progress of her army, which was not able to subdue that kingdom, notwithstanding the assistance of her ally.

This experiment not being very promising, the conferences for a peace were renewed. The formidable adversary of France was fortunately no longer at the head of the British Ministry. Mr. Pitt, perceiving the influence which the artful intrigues of

* *Le Robuste* of 74 guns, *l'Esveillè* of 64, *La Garonne* of 44, and *la Licorne* of 30.

† Upwards of four millions sterling.

1762.

the Duke de Choiseul had with the favourites of the new King, and hearing the phrase continually repeated, with which we quieted the uneasiness of the Parisians, but which was ridiculous and incredible at London, *that the English were destroying themselves by their very success*, resolved to make one last effort. He declared at the Council at St. James's, that now was the time to humble all the House of Bourbon; that if the opportunity were missed, it would never return again; and that, if his advice were not followed upon this occasion, he would sit no more in the Council. He thanked the Ministers of the late King for their support; said, that he had been called up to administration by the voice of the people, to whom he considered himself as accountable for his conduct; and that he could not answer for measures which were not to be conducted with that unanimity, that dispatch, and especially that secrecy which was requisite. These prophetic words not having operated in his favour with the King, he resigned.

From that time the obstacles in the way of peace were soon removed. The new Ministers were almost as desirous of it as France. This is proved by a singular anecdote; which is, that Count Viry, Ambassador from his Sardinian Majesty to the Court of London, the agent of the negotiations carried on through the mediation of his master, was at this period put upon the list of pensioners on the Irish establishment, with a very considerable pension*.

* We find this fact recorded in *the History of the War of 1756*, written in English.

1762.

3 Nov.

The treaty therefore was soon concluded: the conferences did not last two months; it was forgotten, that the present war had arisen only from the preceding treaty not having been sufficiently digested; from some points in it having been left undetermined, and others ambiguous; and the business was carried on by both parties with greater precipitation than any individuals would have used in the discussion of a matter the least intricate. And how exceedingly intricate must not this treaty have been? However this may be, Lewis XV. still preserving the shadow of his greatness, saw his enemy sign the articles in his palace. It was at Fontainebleau that the Duke de Praslin, the King's Minister, the Marquis de Grimaldi, Ambassador from Spain, and the Duke of Bedford, Plenipotentiary from the King of England, met on this important object. The arrangement was declared to be in common with Portugal, which was obliged to be satisfied with the destiny allotted to it by the greater Powers. But England neglected so much to stipulate for the interests of the King of Prussia, that the Ministers of this Prince protested, at London, against the contents of the treaty, in every thing which concerned the King their master. This was not, however, attended with any consequences; and the peace of Germany was soon after concluded.

However hard and humiliating the terms of the treaty were to France, they were not so much so as she might have expected from her misfortunes and enfeebled state. The Minority in England were sensible of this, and consternation prevailed among the people at the publication of it, as if the law had been dictated to them; or rather, they gave themselves

1762.

themselves up to the most violent murmurs. This was some consolation to the Duke de Choiseul. He already foresaw, in this dissatisfaction, the principle of those revolutions which he was resolved to encourage: and doubted not but that he should be able to repair, by intrigue, the losses which France experienced from the fate of arms. The sacrifices made by the kingdom were as immense as they were distressing;—they renounced the point of honour which they had most at heart, the restitution of the ships taken in full peace, against the right of nations, which had been the immediate cause of the war;—they renounced their claims upon Acadia;—they ceded to the King of England the entire property of Canada, the island of Cape Breton, and all the islands of the gulph and river St. Laurence;—they consented no longer to enjoy the cod-fishery, except in a precarious manner, and under the pleasure of his Britannic Majesty, who ceded to them the two little islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon to dry their fish upon; but with the proviso, that they should raise no fortifications upon them, and that the guard kept there should not exceed fifty men;—they suffered themselves to be pent up, even in those possessions which had not yet been broken in upon, and a line drawn through the middle of the whole extent of the river Mississipi, was to mark out the boundaries of Louisiana. England was making, in the articles with respect to the Neutral islands, the division of the Lion. Out of four parts she kept three, and only relinquished the fourth, St. Lucia, in order that it's pestilential air should serve as a grave to the inhabitants that might be sent to it. In Africa, she likewise reserved to herself the most advantageous

1762.

vantageous portion, by keeping Senegal; and gave to France, in the island of Goree, the most ungrateful and destructive part. Upon the coast of Coromandel and Orixá, she restored the factories that had been seized upon, but in the state in which they were at the time, that is to say, dismantled, laid waste, and abandoned. In a word, the city and port of Dunkirk were to be reduced to the same state as agreed upon by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, and some Commissioners of his Britannic Majesty were to remain for an unlimited time upon the spot, to attend to the execution of this article; which Commissioners were to be paid by France. Spain, for having interfered one moment in the dispute, was obliged to give up Florida and Pensacola to England; to permit her to cut logwood in the Bay of Honduras; and to desist from its claims to the fishery of Newfoundland.

This would be the opportunity of examining, whether, to so many irritating clauses, a secret one were added, more useful and more glorious to Great Britain, by which the small number of ships, they condescended to allow to France, was to be fixed. This report was credited for a long time; and an ignorant writer*, impudently announcing himself of late as the interpreter of Government and the avenger of the nation, has ventured to assert it as a positive and indubitable fact; but it has been contradicted immediately by the Duke de Nivernois, who was sent to London in quality of Minister Plenipotentiary for this peace; by the Dukes of Choiseul

* M. Caron de Beaumarchais, author of a pamphlet, intitled, "Observations on the Memorial in justification of the Court of London."

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and Praslin, Ministers at that time, under whose direction the negotiations were carried on; and at length, by a decree of Council *, declaring the assertion to be false and absurd. The Duke de Praslin, in his letter, which is written in a very noble manner, after having treated the pamphlet, which is the object of it, with the contempt the author deserves, declares, that he only takes notice of it, because the Ministry, by suffering the pamphlet to be printed and published, seemed to give it a degree of credit among readers, which of itself it could not obtain. Moreover, he makes an observation more convincing than any reasoning one could add upon the subject, which is, that since the peace, we have been incessantly employed in restoring the navy; a circumstance which the English beheld with anxiety, and with a jealous eye; but of which they have not made any complaint, well knowing that they had no right to hinder it. The Minority in England would certainly not have complained so loudly, if this stipulation had been inserted in the treaty. It was the most essential point, which Pitt would not have failed to insist upon, inasmuch as it would have deprived France for ever of the rivalry of the sea; a rivalry which sooner or later she might affect or resume. Another condition of the treaty which offended the Minority, and was really a capital fault, as the English Ministry must perceive at present, was the restoration of Guadaloupe and Martinico, two powerful colonies, which, by their population and riches, and especially by their position, might easily revive the commerce of the

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* Dated 19th December 1779.

1762. French, and fix them in a flourishing state in the Antilles. It is certain, that if his Britannic Majesty had required them to be given up, the peace, which was imposed by necessity, would not less have been concluded.

This war, and even this peace, were a salutary lesson to Lewis XV. had he known how to profit by it. He would have been convinced, that a kingdom, however powerful it may be, may easily decline in a few years, and fall from the summit of prosperity, into a state of humiliation;—that the most numerous and best-appointed armies, without discipline and without subordination, can never conquer a handful of Spartans;—that commerce, the continual support of the riches of the State, cannot maintain itself, without the concurrence and constant protection of the royal navy, nor the latter form itself but at the school of the former;—that opulence becomes only a source of corruption and ruin, unless it be prudently managed:—in a word, that there is no solidity in empire, unless it be founded on œconomy—no great King, unless he hold the reins of his government himself—no monarch fortunate, without the love of his subjects.

Alas! Lewis XV. knew all this, but had not the strength of mind to put these maxims in practice. The confusion in which the war had thrown the several parts of his kingdom, terrified him; he endeavoured only to turn his eyes and his thoughts from it, and plunged deeper and deeper in indolence and debauchery. This is what we shall observe during the last period of his reign, which we have compared to that, which fabulous poets describe to us under the energetic, but too real title, of *the iron age*.

If

If any thing could have brought this Prince to a sense of virtue, and of his obligations, it would have been the cruel losses he successively experienced; but they served only to confirm and to evince his want of sensibility; at least they made only very slight impressions upon him, from which he soon endeavoured to divert his thoughts, as from the misfortunes of his kingdom.

The Dutchess of Parma, who came to Versailles to receive the caresses of her august father, who had always tenderly loved her, was the first who perished in his presence, having been carried off by the small-pox. Her death ought to have affected him the more, as this Princess was his confidant, and that he poured into her breast all the afflictions with which he was tormented. It was to her that he had written: "They have teased me, till they have forced me to dismiss M. Machault, the man after my own heart. I shall never be comforted for this step*." This sentence alone would be sufficient to give us the picture of Lewis XV. if even there were not a thousand similar strokes to complete it.

The Princess of Condé, whom her graces and youth, and Count Charolois, whom the vigour of his constitution, and a life of the greatest activity, could not preserve from the grave, followed this first warning; which was soon succeeded by a third, more awful. The Duke of Burgundy, eldest son to the Dauphin, having languished more than a twelve-

* The Baron de Houze, Minister Plenipotentiary from the King to the Princes and States of the circle of Lower Saxony, must have read this sentence in the original letter.

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month, fell a victim to his sufferings, from which all the assistances of art had not been able to preserve him. This young Prince, while he was at play with some children of quality of his own age, got a fall; and from the fear, that he who had been the occasion of it should be punished or reprimanded, he would say nothing of the accident, and concealed his hurt for a long time; till, at length, a tumor appeared. The physicians, ignorant of the true cause, attributed this to a foreign one: they ordered an operation, which the Duke sustained with a degree of firmness and steadiness infinitely beyond his strength, and with a courage still more admirable, he persisted in concealing the name of the person in fault, and always received him with the same civility.

Helvetius, in order to explain the nature of affection—which does not seem to go upwards, but, on the contrary, increases the lower it descends, says, that the reason why grandfathers are so fond of their grandchildren, is, because they see in them the enemies of their enemies. This assertion, which, in the literal acceptation, seems disgusting and barbarous, yet, when reduced and modified, is extremely sensible and philosophical. Man, who is repugnant to his dissolution, by a secret instinct is afflicted at seeing those who are to succeed him, more immediately recalling to his mind this period. His grandchildren, on the contrary, destined one day by nature to act the same part with regard to their fathers, bring him back to an idea of consolatory resignation, from the consideration of that law of fatality to which all beings, without exception, are subject. It is undoubtedly in this manner that Lewis XV. who was naturally

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turally a good father, appeared more affected at the Duke of Burgundy's death, than he was afterwards at that of his only son. Fortunately, he had three grandsons remaining, that is to say, in the sense of the author of the book *de l'Esprit*, *three enemies of his enemy*.

A serious illness which attacked the Marchioness de Pompadour, during a journey of pleasure to Choisy—an illness which soon reduced her to a decline, of which death only was to be the period—would have been a deplorable spectacle for a lover, and even for a mere friend. Lewis XV. who, from the beginning, insisted that the faculty should conceal nothing from him, received, without emotion, the fatal stroke which they prognosticated to him. Every thing, however, must be said, for he conducted himself at the same time with the favourite, as if he had thought the contrary; he not only bestowed upon her all the considerations, attentions, and assiduities, the most comfortable for a sick person, but he also continued to consult her upon public affairs. The Ministers, the kingdom, and all, remained subject to her as before. She expired, if we may say so, with the reins of the State still in her hands. A few hours before her last breath, M. Janet came, as usual, to give her an account of the private State correspondence. Every morning the Duke de Fleuri, Gentleman of the Bed-chamber in waiting, brought to his Majesty the report of the physicians attending upon Madame de Pompadour; and being conveyed from Choisy to Versailles, she enjoyed the privilege reserved to the Royal Family alone, to remain ill, and to pay the last tribute to nature in that castle, from whence so much care is

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taken

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taken to remove every thing that can recall the miseries and the period of human life. It is true, that as soon as she was expired, her corpse was carried away, and conveyed in a kind of litter to her private hotel in the city; and Lewis XV. was observed at his window coolly seeing her pass. This was a proof of the most complete apathy. Undoubtedly, every sentiment of love for her was extinguished in the heart of the Monarch. But what man could see a connection of twenty years continuance dissolved, without shedding tears? Besides, this separation left him almost alone in the midst of his family, from which the Marchioness attempted more and more to divide him. Disgusted with the Queen, and in awe of the austerity of his son and the Dauphiness, he could not be more reconciled to the manners of his daughters, and to their mode of living, devoted to the most minute exercises of devotion. He had lost the affection of his subjects a long time, but he at least shared their hatred equally with his mistress, whereas that hatred was going to fall upon him alone. In a word, his very indolence ought to have awakened him from his lethargy, on account of the burthen of affairs which Madame de Pompadour had eased him of, and the whole weight of which she left upon him at her death. The Ministers, and especially the Duke de Choiseul, becoming each more despotic in their department, relieved him from this embarrassment, the only one which could really affect his Majesty.

Did the Marchioness, however—whom all the kingdom detested with reason—really deserve the tenderness and affection of her august lover? This is a point, the discussion of which, without justifying

ing his insensibility, might perhaps assign a motive for it. Very different from Madame de Mailly, the Marchioness never loved the King for himself. Dazzled, at least, with the splendour of the throne, as the Duchess of Chateau-roux—who was devoured with a noble ambition—she did not, in imitation of that lady, endeavour to approach it, to inspire the King with a thirst of glory, the *eclat* of which might be reflected upon her, and conceal her dishonour. She had wit, but of a trifling kind; and all her passions were stamped with the impression of this littleness. She was fond of money, and only considered in the supreme rank a greater facility of acquiring it, and of gratifying her excessive propensity to luxury and trifles. If she cultivated and encouraged the arts, it was only in the same point of view, and merely those which were analogous to the taste of her sex. She governed, because she had to do with a Prince who would be governed; and was obliged to assume the reins of the State, that they might not fall into other hands. The character of the favourite rendered her susceptible of being enslaved in her turn; and it was successively M. de Machault, Cardinal Bernis, Marshal Belleisle, and the Duke de Choiseul, who, while they influenced her, directed the kingdom. The same disposition manifested itself in the management of her domestic concerns; and her people did as they pleased with her. Having herself no kind of energy, she could not inspire Lewis XV. with any, and became therefore the mistress the most dangerous and the most fatal to him and to his people. From hence sprang anarchy, disorder, and all the misfortunes of France!

After

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After such a detail of her character, we should not have expected, that Madame de Pompadour would have seen the gradual approaches of death without murmur, and with an heroic firmness. The place where she was, and the turn of the King's mind, obliged her to fulfil the last duties of religion; which she did without ostentation or pusillanimity. She loudly asked pardon of her family, and of all the Courtiers present, for the scandal she had occasioned. The most singular circumstance of this scene is, that priests should not have required of her, living in a state of double adultery, what they require usually in cases of simple fornication—that the concubine should quit the spot in which her libidinous life had been spent, and that she should make this reparation in that palace, which for twenty years past had been the stage of her iniquity. But there are terms to be made with Court confessors; and it was decided that she was too ill to bear being removed. On the very day when she was expecting her last moment, the Curate of la Madeleine, the parish of her hotel at Paris, came to see her, and as he was taking leave of her, *Stay a moment*, said she, *Monsieur le Curé, we will go together*. Madame du Haussset, her first woman, closed her eyes. This lady was the widow of a man of fashion; her necessities had obliged her to attach herself to the favourite: reserved, discreet, having no spirit of intrigue, but rather inclined to devotion, she had served her for twenty years, and retired with a very moderate fortune.

In the various characters in which the Marchioness appeared, there is no kind of fortune, dignity, or honour, which a woman cannot attain, and to which she cannot raise every one connected with her. Nevertheless,

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vertheless, in the family of Madame de Pompadour, we see a new phenomenon; a certain Poisson de Malvoisin, in less than five-and-twenty years, become, from a drummer, a Major-General, and that even after having been retarded in his promotion by the humiliating refusal which the King's regiment made of admitting him into their corps*. As for the rest, it is impossible to enumerate the millions which the Marquis de Marigny reaped from the inheritance of his sister. The sale of her furniture only lasted a year. It was a sight people used to flock to from curiosity: rarities were continually produced there, which could not be seen any where else. It seemed as if all the quarters of the globe had been rendered tributary to the luxury of the Marchioness. If we

* M. de Poisson de Malvoisin was a drummer in the regiment of Piedmont. When he was acquainted with his cousin's elevation, he went to her, and solicited her to promote him. She consented to it, but upon condition that he should quit a situation where it would be too difficult to get him forward. He declared to her, that he had an absolute inclination for the profession of arms; that he was determined to remain in it, and that she was powerful enough to promote him in that, as well as in any other station. The Duke de Biron, Colonel of the King's regiment, was then one of the most assiduous Courtiers of the favourite. She availed herself of this circumstance, and signified to him the desire she had of putting her relation in his corps. The Duke had the meanness to accept, and the officers the courage to reject him. They received the polished drummer very graciously, but without concealing from him, that, brave as they thought him, he would certainly fall at last, unless he should kill the whole corps one after another. Upon this he withdrew. Madame de Pompadour, whose vanity was exceedingly hurt, wanted to persist, and have the regiment punished. It was in time of war, and the matter was therefore troublesome: she was appeased; her relation was made Lieutenant of Dragoons, then Captain, and afterwards was promoted in the Carabineers, &c.

compare

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compare the riches, and magnificence of the spoils, of this mistress of the King, with the simplicity and poverty of Madame de Maintenon, the widow of Lewis XIV. retired to St. Cyr, we readily perceive the different disposition of their minds, and we may easily judge of the estimation they will both hold in the memory of posterity; we readily conceive why Lewis XV. who could not have any esteem for his favourite, kept her only because he was obliged to it, and, as he therefore must have wished to get rid of her, so he soon forgot her.

Alas! what did not Lewis XV. forget? He forgot even his only son, whose death spread so much consternation throughout the whole kingdom. For a long time, the nation had entertained no great regard for this prince; but at length he had secured to himself their veneration, by the austerity of his manners, by the wisdom of his political conduct, by his constant study of his duties of all kinds, to make himself fit to reign; in a word, by the detestation he shewed of vice, and by his uniform attention in collecting about him none but men of weight and virtue, or, at least, such as deceived him by their hypocrisy. The circumstance that ought particularly to render his memory for ever dear to the French, is a stroke of domestic heroism, so much the more great as it could proceed from nothing but the excellence of his heart; as the sole internal satisfaction of giving way to it's benevolent impulse could urge him to it, and be it's only reward; and as the sacrifice which it obliged him to, was renewed every day, and became the greater, the longer he persevered in it. Having had the misfortune, at a hunting-party, to wound by accident one of his grooms, he remained inconsolable; he

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he resolved to wean himself from a pleasure which had been so unfortunate to him; and since that time he, never gave way to the frequent temptations of resuming this exercise. In the first moments of his concern, his *Menins*, endeavouring to comfort him with the assurance that the wound would not be mortal: *What!* said he, *is there then nothing less than the death of a man that should afflict me?* If no other particular of his life had been preserved, except this single speech, it would suffice to shew how much a Prince, who had so much consideration for mankind, was worthy to govern.

About the time that the Marchioness of Pompadour died, it was perceived that the Dauphin, who had till then enjoyed a good state of health, began to decline. He imperceptibly grew thin: the freshness of his complexion was changed; and paleness effaced the florid hue of his countenance. It was evident that some secret languor consumed him; the cause of which was enquired into, and every one formed his own conjectures. It has been said, that the Prince had attempted to dry up a tetter, the humour of which being incautiously repelled, had fallen upon his lungs. But the Dauphiness not having communicated this anecdote to the person who drew up the memoirs of the life of her august husband, we must consider it as a fable. It is more probable, from the hints she has made the historian give, that his grief for the misfortunes of religion, and particularly for the destruction of the Jesuits, had been the first cause of his illness. However this may be, after having given some gleam of hope, by the use of grapes, which he had made his only food, this Prince having fatigued himself at Compiègne, at the exercises

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cises of the camp, which he was very fond of, caught a severe cold, and it was soon perceived that his chest was affected. He would not give any trouble, either at his return from this journey, or in that to Fontainebleau, from whence it was impossible to bring him back. The King behaved to him exactly as he had done to Madame de Pompadour, and was very attentive to appearances. He had the complaisance to remain in this very melancholy and unwholesome place, till the death of his son. But all his last moments were calculated ; the result of which was a shocking spectacle to this expiring Prince, which religion alone could make supportable to him. He beheld from his bed every thing that was passing in the court of the castle, and this sometimes caused a diversion from his sufferings. As he drew near to his end, and that the departure was fixed to the instant when he should expire, every one was busy in preparing for this, in order to prevent the packing up of the whole Court at once, which must occasion considerable confusion. The dying Prince remarked the packets that were thrown out of the windows, and placed upon the carriages, and said to La Breuille, his physician, who was still desirous of removing from him the fatal idea of the last moment, and of reviving his hopes: *I must die, for I am troublesome to too many people.*

Dec. 10.

The King had charged the Grand Almoner not to leave his son while he was in the last conflict, and to receive his soul. As soon as he saw the Prelate return to him, he concluded that all was over. He immediately took his resolution, sent for the Duke de Berry, the eldest of the sons of France, and, after having addressed him in terms suitable to the circumstances,

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cumstances, he led him to his august mother. On entering the apartment, he said to the Usher: *Announce the King and the Dauphin.* The Princess understood what was meant by this new ceremonial; and, throwing herself at his Majesty's feet, implored his protection for herself and her children.

Agreeable to the last will of the Dauphin, his heart only was carried to Saint Denis, and his body to Sens. His obsequies were celebrated, throughout the kingdom, with a zeal and an eagerness of which no instance is remembered even in favour of the King. Among the several funeral orations made in praise of this Prince, there was none equal to this distich, by M. de Voltaire, to be placed under his picture.

Connu par ses vertus, plus que par ses travaux,
Il sçut penser en Sage, et mourir en Héros * !

If Lewis XV. bore with his usual indifference the death of his only son, on the other hand, he behaved towards the Dauphiness in the most proper manner to comfort her, if it had been possible, for the irreparable loss she had sustained. He took care that she should not perceive any change in her situation; he increased the number of her guards; he gave her an apartment she seemed to wish for, under his; and, by his orders, there was a staircase made which communicated with it; he exhausted the refinements of gallantry in fitting it up, and, to spare that Princess the fatigue of the staircase, he ordered a bell to be fixed up in his apartment.

* Virtue, beyond exploits, was all his pride,
He liv'd a Sage, and as a Hero died.

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which

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which was to answer to the one she occupied. Being asked about the rank she was in future to hold at Court, he answered, "It belongs only to the Crown absolutely to decide upon questions of rank. Mothers have it over their children by natural right; so that the Dauphiness shall have it over her son, till he becomes King."

So many attentions, privileges, and distinctions, were not able to produce the effect which the King sincerely wished, that of alleviating the affliction of the Dauphiness, and contributing to the re-establishment of her health. The fatal stroke was given: by her sleeping constantly with the Dauphin, as she used always to do before he was upon his death-bed, by often sitting up with him, and passing hours within his curtains, breathing the pestilential effluvia of the dying man, her lungs became also affected: grief, to which she incessantly gave way, and which aggravates the slightest disorders, soon rendered her's incurable. Fifteen months after, she followed her husband, and was buried by his side, as she had requested of the King. A memorable example of conjugal love, so rarely to be met with, especially at Court. This Princess was not less a model of maternal affection. She had always considered the attending to the education of her children as her first care, and as the most sacred of all duties. During the life of the Dauphin, she had divided that duty with him, at his death she took it entirely upon herself. Latin, French, sacred and profane history, the duties of their station, and those of religion, were all taught them by that wise and virtuous Princess; and, notwithstanding her exhausted and languishing condition, she never ceased fulfilling that duty till the day before her death.

This

13 March,
1767.

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This dismal event had been preceded by another, of the same nature, premature, though happening in extreme old-age, and remarkable from its circumstances. King Stanislaus, whom the affection of the Lorrains would have rendered immortal, if Heaven had granted their prayers, being still in perfect health, and sitting alone by his fire-side, his night-gown took fire, and, not getting timely assistance, he perished by this dreadful accident. In a word, by a concurrence of singular fatalities, the Queen was seized, in her turn, with a lingering and unknown illness, and to which the faculty gave the new or renewed name of *Coma Vigil*, intending to express by that the situation of her Majesty, the faculties of whose mind were suspended, without her senses being in a state of absolute rest. Having been alternately better and worse for the space of several months, without any hopes of recovery, she died soon after her father, nearly in the same interval of time as had elapsed between the death of the Dauphin and of the Dauphiness.

We are not unacquainted with the reports that have been circulated concerning most of these successive deaths, which were all extraordinary, though all different, all lingering, foreseen, and fixed at stated times, in some measure determined and periodical; but we consider these reports as being merely the effects of the exalted imagination of a few politicians eager after romantic anecdotes, and who take it for granted, that the most perilous crimes are as easily effected as conceived. These rumours have arisen from a first supposition, that the assassination of Lewis XV. was the result of a deep plot; and, as an unfathomed crime is al-

1768. ways to be laid to the charge of the person who is to be benefited by it, the horrid insinuations have been carried so far as to affect the heir apparent of the Crown. Unfortunately, or rather fortunately, the first thing which contradicts the calculations of these gloomy inquirers, is, that Madaine de Pompadour was the first in this train of victims;—that we cannot reasonably suppose, that the same hand which poisoned the favourite, would have poisoned the Dauphin, the Dauphiness, and the Queen;—that, in this case, we must admit two sets of poisoners, who, striving alternately one against the other, must have reciprocally contended in committing these enormities, and must have done it without any other advantage but that of impunity; while the King, giving a sanction at least, by his silence, to these execrable pastimes, would have enjoyed the barbarous pleasure of seeing those who were most dear to him destroyed; a spectacle which, by its continuation, and the horror it occasioned—unless we give to Lewis XV. the heart of a Nero, and the dissimulation of a Tiberius—must have been a perpetual torment to him; a torment which even the most obdurate villain could not bear. Such would be the contradictions, absurdities, and abominable consequences, that must necessarily follow the admission of a fact, without which, however, the others are absurd, and fall to the ground. It is most probable, that if there were any assassins, they were the Physicians.

An act of tenderness which escaped the King, at the death of the Queen, makes it probable, that her's was the one which most affected him. M. de Laffone her Majesty's first Physician, being come, according

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according to custom, to break the fatal news to the august husband, the King followed him; he entered the apartment, drew near the bed in which was the corpse, and embraced for the last time the inanimate remains. He afterwards made M. de Lassone relate to him every thing that passed in the last moments of the Queen. The Doctor, while he was giving this account to the Monarch, turned pale, staggered, and grew faint. His Majesty himself supported him in his arms, and led him to an arm-chair; thus giving at once a memorable instance of conjugal tenderness and of humanity.

The more we advance in the life of this Prince, the more we find it difficult to form a proper idea of him. We find by his will, that, ever since the year 1766, the first epocha in which he thought of it, he had been sensible of his faults, and of the errors of his reign. He had suppressed the *Parc aux Cerfs*, and endeavoured, at least, to avoid the scandal of a life too publicly dissolute; and yet at the death of the Queen, which seemed as if it ought to have confirmed him in his good resolutions, he plunged himself again into the greatest excesses, gave way to all his weaknesses, and suffered his kingdom to become the prey of all the plunderers about it.

This excited the greater consternation, as Lewis XV. had in this interval done an act of vigour astonishing in him, inasmuch as it seemed to announce a sincere resolution of leading a better life, and to remove from the eyes of his people every thing that could recall the memory of his ill conduct. Among the number of beauties offered to his choice, he

1768. had distinguished a Demoiselle Romans, a lady of tolerable birth, well enough educated, and of an ingenuous disposition; who, resisting his first importunities, had only consented to yield to them, upon condition that she should not be introduced in that infamous seraglio, in which her equals were indiscriminately confounded. His Majesty had attached himself to her, and had bought her a house at Passy, where the young lady was brought to bed of a son. The King, delighted, had permitted her to have the child christened in his name, with a promise to acknowledge him at a proper time and place; but requiring secrecy upon this head, till it should please him to make his will public. Mademoiselle Romans had suckled this illustrious babe herself, and, considering him less as her own son than as that of Lewis XV. she had the childishness to render him anticipated honours; she never called him any thing else but *Monsieur*; she placed him forwards in her coach, and sat backwards herself, as his Governess; she even required the same homage, not only of her servants and family, but also of all the strangers who came to visit her. For a long time, the King was inwardly flattered with this puerility, and had put up with it, because, being confined to the house, nothing of it transpired abroad. Besides, this subaltern Sultana lived in profound retirement, shewed a great deal of modesty, even edified, as much as her situation would allow, her neighbours, and her Curate; and made herself generally beloved by her acts of charity and benevolence; and she particularly avoided interfering in public affairs. This circumstance
had

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had prevented Madame de Pompadour, and the Ministers after her, from taking any umbrage on her account. But what asylums are not violated by a man of an intriguing spirit? What tranquillity will he not disturb, when it is useful to his projects? A certain Abbé de Lustrac, a man of rank, seeing the acknowledged favourite dead, without being succeeded, thought the opportunity favourable, and introduced himself at Mademoiselle de Romans', under pretence of assisting her in her education of her son. She had but little understanding, so that he soon gained her confidence; and she was very glad to find in him an adviser, and a man capable of dictating her letters to the King. Although she was not tormented with the ambition of being the acknowledged favourite, yet he attacked her on the side of her foible for her child, and persuaded her of the necessity of pressing his Majesty to confirm his Royal word with regard to this precious pledge of his love. The more the Monarch evaded this, the more did he make her sensible of the necessity of awakening his tenderness: he gave her to understand, that the King could not give a settlement to the young Prince, without confirming, beyond a possibility of shaking it, that of the mother. He flattered her pride so much, that she went more abroad, affected airs of grandeur, and did not conceal the pretensions upon which they were founded. She thought by this, that she should in a manner force her august lover to accelerate the desired moment. The matter turned out quite otherwise. Lewis XV. was offended, and the Ministers, who were very well pleased to have got rid

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of the yoke of an imperious mistress, not being inclined to submit to a second, increased his Majesty's displeasure to such a degree, that Mademoiselle de Romans was very harshly carried off, and conducted to a convent by a letter *de cachet*. She was separated from her son, who was placed in a college, without her knowing where he was; and her confidant was closely confined in a strong castle. Thus was this plot dissipated; and the public, who were ignorant of the secret cause of such an event, attributed it to the repentance of the guilty Monarch. We have seen that there was something in this. Madame Adelaide has even said * since his death, on account of the above-mentioned will, that her august father was sincerely converted at that time, and resolved to live like a good Christian; but that Marshal Richelieu, under pretence of diverting him from his grief, had again induced him to sin. It was soon after this that Madame Dubarri made her appearance, who filled up the last episode of the amours of this Prince, and completed the infamy with which his life was already too much loaded. But we are not yet come to that period, to that abominable account, which we could wish our readers would not require from us. We will at least put it off, although, on whatever side we turn ourselves, we shall only exhibit things shocking to relate.

In the circle of human revolutions, we learn, that good is almost always the result of extreme evil.

* It was to M. d'Outremont, Advocate, called in at Choisy, at the opening of the will of Lewis XV. that Madame Adelaide made the above speech.

Thus

1768.

Thus it is, that war, the source of so many calamities, generally quiets the intestine divisions and particular commotions of a State. If the war of 1756 did not entirely extinguish the schism, it cooled it considerably; it prevented the public from taking any part in it; and, other events having succeeded to the peace, it only drew nearer to it's total annihilation. The Magistrates were obliged to employ their attention upon more important grievances, arising, it is true, from a common source. Yet there were always the same enemies to encounter, with this difference only, that they had substituted the political mask to that of religion.

The Grand Chamber, which had remained assembled in 1757, in order to keep up the part of mediator and intercessor, with which they coloured their defection, ever since the trial of Damiens, were continually soliciting, as a reward for their zeal and their labours, the re-union of the other Chambers. The Council, which stood in need of the Parliament, as being the only tribunal in which the public reposed confidence, for the registering of the taxes, and who flattered themselves they would become more tractable after their late disgrace, were equally desirous of it. The resignations were therefore returned; that Court was re-established in all their functions, and obtained all the interpretations and modifications they required, with regard to the laws which displeased them, together with the repeal of their banished members. M. de Maupeou, their First President, formerly the idol of the Company, had incurred their suspicions, and was looked upon by them as a traitor. He was obliged to give in his dismissal, and was succeeded by M. Molé, a name which

1 Sept.
1757.

Thus

1768.

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which can never be pronounced without conceiving, at the same time, ideas of grandeur and patriotism. In a word, the two Counsellors of State, who had laboured to effect the reconciliation of matters, were rewarded, by being introduced into the Council of Dispatches. These were Messrs. Gilbert de Voisins and Berryer; the former had been useful on account of his knowledge and conciliating disposition, and the latter by his intrigues with the Marchioness, with whom he had frequent intercourse from his post of Lieutenant of Police. The pretence for this innovation was, that this Council, to which affairs concerning the internal administration of the kingdom are referred, being chiefly composed of members, who, ignorant of the laws, the judicial forms, the rights, jurisdictions, and customs of the several tribunals of the kingdom, had already caused the King, twice successively, to take false steps with the Parliament. This Body was thus indirectly flattered; and the Court wished to persuade them, that they should not have any similar injustice to fear in future: and persons who were not perfectly acquainted with the manner in which the greatest events were brought about at that time, approved an arrangement, formed, to all appearance, for the good of the State.

From the same spirit of pacification, which had made the King give way—whose great system it was, never to find any body guilty—the banished Prelates were recalled. Some of them were removed, but in order to be better treated—which could not be agreeable to the Parliament. Fortunately, the Archbishop of Paris soon furnished them with a fresh subject of triumph. Still persevering in his obstinacy, and
refusing

refusing to take off the interdiction from the Nuns belonging to the hospital of the suburb Saint-Marceau, he was banished to his brother's castle in Perigord, a very disagreeable and unwholesome place, where he was obliged to repair immediately, after having appointed four Grand Vicars to govern his diocese. The cognizance of the affairs of the Hospital General, from whence the schism arose, which had been at that time given to the Grand Council, was also returned to the Magistrates, to whom it essentially belonged. In a word, the Parliament had the satisfaction of not being disturbed in their zeal to extirpate the remains of the schism. They condemned, without interference from Government, the Curate of Saint Nicholas des Champs to banishment, for non-appearance, and four Ecclesiastics of the parish, for having refused the Sacraments.

1768.

17 March
1758.17 Jan.
1759.

But the most fortunate and most flattering event to the Parliament was, to see the Jesuits humbled at their feet; to enjoy gradually the pleasure of revenge; to hold the balance of their destiny; and, by a series of concurring circumstances which they could not have hoped for, to have the glory entirely to demolish a society, which, strengthened by the public opinion, seemed inexpugnable, and inspired the most powerful Potentates with a kind of terror.

A single spark produced this great conflagration. The person whom the Jesuits considered as the most extraordinary man, and the most proper to extend their riches and credit, brought this destruction upon them. Father de la Vallette, agent for the house of St. Pierre in Martinico, carried on, since the year 1747, a very lucrative commerce. By his ingenious and bold speculations, he had augmented it

1768. to such a degree as to excite the jealousy of the merchants and inhabitants of the colony; who saw with regret, that a Jesuit heaped up all their commodities in his magazines, poured all their specie into his own coffers, and intercepted the circulation from every quarter, in order that he might have the exclusive management and distribution of it. Complaints of this monopoly were carried to the throne, and it became necessary to recall this member; who deserved a recompence from his Order, and who at the same time received from them the honourable title of *Superior General of the Windward Islands*. The credit of the Jesuits pacified the alarms given to Government. Father la Valette was allowed to return to Martinico, decorated with the title of Visitor General and Apostolic Prefect of the Missions in that part of the world. He soon resumed the course of his affairs, formed establishments as far as the neighbouring islands, and had factories at Dominica, Marie-Galante, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent. He drew bills of exchange upon Bourdeaux, Nantz, Lyons, Paris, Cadiz, Leghorn, and Amsterdam; and it is impossible to calculate how far his ambition would have extended, had it not been for the unforeseen catastrophe which demolished all his projects.

His vessels, laden with riches, went over the seas with security, when the English began those general hostilities, fatal to so many speculators, and especially to the brothers Lionay and Gouffre, merchants at Marseilles, who, in expectation of two millions* of merchandize, had accepted notes to the amount

* Upwards of eighty-three thousand three hundred pounds.

1768.

of a million and a half * drawn by the Jesuits. As soon as they were informed of the fatal stroke, they had recourse to Father Sacy, Agent General of the Missions, who referred the matter to his superiors. By a fatality which seemed then to concur in the ruin of the Society, the death of their Chief had suspended the activity of their administration; there were unavoidable delays; the merchants could not receive the succours they expected; the notes were becoming due; and despair took possession of the hearts of the Lionays. That house, which circulated thirty millions † per annum; that house, so much distinguished, situated upon the public place at Marseilles, was reduced from the summit of opulence to the horrors of a declared bankruptcy, and had the misfortune also to involve a multitude of unfortunate persons in it's ruin. Their correspondences, which were infinite, affected all the commercial towns throughout the kingdom of France. In the mean time, the new Chief of the Jesuits, conscious of the necessity of supporting the credit of his agents, had given orders to send them the funds requisite. The courier who was charged with this important news arrived at the brothers Lionay on the 22d February 1756, and they had stopped payment the 19th. From a singular and unaccountable caprice—equally repugnant to the spirit of equity which ought to prevail in a religious Order, and to policy, which these were supposed to possess in a superior degree—the Jesuits, finding that the eclat was made, withdrew their support. In

* Sixty-two thousand five hundred pounds. †

† One million two hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

vain

1768. vain did the Lionays write the most affecting letters to Father Sacy : he had nothing but tears and prayers to grant them; he made an offering for them of the holy sacrifice of the Mass *.

The inconsistency of the Society was carried to the most extreme degree in this affair; for, notwithstanding their insensibility to the misfortunes of their agents, they nevertheless acknowledged the debts of Father de la Valette, and even caused part of them to be paid by another correspondent. In a word, whether it were that they were tired of being just, or that they found the impossibility of satisfying all the demands, or whether an invisible and inimical power drove them to their destruction, the channels through which periodical supplies were transmitted, to the merchant who succeeded the Lionays, were shut, and all the payments stopped. An immense number of creditors appeared, and the tribunals resounded with their complaints. The Jesuits still had the credit to obtain letters patent to carry these disputes to the *Grand Chamber* of the Parliament of Paris; but this was their last effort. Their object had been to have the cause referred, and thus to render it indeterminable; at least to conduct it in obscurity, that they might be more at liberty to continue their manœuvres. A decree was issued, ordering the cause to be tried; and the universal joy which the persons who assisted at the audience expressed, ought to have apprized them of the danger of exposing themselves in public : but

17 Aug.
1760.

* These ridiculous phrases were quoted in the pleading of M. Legoave, in favour of the brothers Lionay, as extracted from the original letters of Father Sacy.

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they were deaf to this salutary warning, and hastened to their destruction. 1768.

To the capital fault of putting themselves in the hands of justice, the Jesuits added several blunders in their defence. They varied in their depositions two or three times. At first they pretended that the negotiations of Father la Valette ought only to concern the house at Martinico; and Father Sacy answered, in the name of the Society, to M. Gouffre, who solicited him to keep the engagements he had contracted: *Perish, perish all of you, we can do nothing for you.* We have seen, that afterwards, this same Agent General of the Missions had appointed a correspondent to pay the bills of exchange drawn by the house at Martinico; their Advocate soon confined himself to the plea, that there was neither solidity of right nor solidity of fact in the affair of Father de la Valette. In a word, they had recourse to a singular subterfuge; they said, that commerce being forbidden to religious Orders by the canons of the Church, and by the laws, it was a formal opposition to them on the part of Father de la Valette, an offence against the Church, which ought not to be attributed to the whole Society, *because offences are personal, and that in criminal matters there are no sureties.* But the completion of their errors was the giving into the snare that had been prepared for them by their adversaries. These—in order to prove that the government of the Jesuits was despotic; that every thing was submitted to the power of the General; that he was the sole proprietor and distributor of the funds, in the name of the Company; that Father de la Valette neither was, nor could be, any thing more than the Agent of the Society, appointed

1768. appointed by the General—appealed to, and quoted the constitutions of the Society, with which they seemed to be perfectly acquainted. The Jesuits, on the contrary, referred to those same constitutions, to prove that the Society had no property, and that the funds belonged to the several Colleges or Houses. This was what the Public Tribunal expected; they required the deposit of the fatal book, from which was to follow not only the loss of the cause, but the entire extinction of the Order. Accordingly, the Parliament ordered the constitutions to be brought to the office of the Court. A series of terrible decrees, succeeding each other with incredible rapidity, was the result of this inquiry.

17 April,
1761.

Decree of
the 18th
May,
1761.

The General, and in him the Society, were condemned to pay the bills of exchange, with the interests, damages, and costs; and, by the resolution of the Public Tribunal, Father la Valette, and all the other members, were forbidden, under such penalties as might be inflicted, to interfere, directly or indirectly, in any kind of traffic which was interdicted to ecclesiastical persons by the canons received in the kingdom, by the ordonnances of the King, and by decrees and regulations of the Court. This sentence was a terrible one; but the Jesuits, perceiving at last, that the only thing they had to do, was to submit to it, took arrangements to pay their creditors. Brother Gatin, appointed Agent General of the Missions in America, found means, in the space of eight or nine months, to pay off near one million three hundred thousand livres*, and it is probable that he would have found other

* Upwards of fifty-four thousand pounds.

1768.

resources to pay them all in a few years, even without disposing of any of the effects of the Society, had it not been for the new blow given to them by the Parliament; a blow equally fatal to the debtors and creditors.

From the examination of the constitutions of the Jesuits, there resulted an admirable, but at the same time an alarming picture of the Order; all the members of which being united together by the conformity of their morals, by the resemblance of their doctrine and manners; united to their Chief by the ties of an implicit submission, and a zealous and speedy obedience; were thus constantly actuated by the same spirit, governed by one soul, and forming an absolutely distinct body in the State, receiving no laws but those of a foreigner, their General, absolute in his will over their dispositions, their manners, and their estates—over their external administration, and over the institution itself.

From the examination of the titles of the foundation of the Order, of its establishment in the kingdom, there appeared another fact, not less striking, namely, that they had been formally excluded from the State as a religious Order, as a society of Jesus, as Jesuits, that is to say, as being what they were;—that if they had been admitted under the form of a college, that is to say, as what they were not, it had only been provisionally, by way of experiment, and with relation to certain conditions, which they had never fulfilled, and to which their General had obstinately refused to subscribe;—so that the contract between this religious Order and the State had never been completed;—and their existence in France was

1768. the effect only of toleration, and not the consequence of adoption.

This double discovery delighted the Magistracy; they foresaw that they should retaliate on the Society all the disgraces, of which they considered the Jesuits as the concealed authors. The Abbé Chauvelin was still alive; this man, whose monstrous deformity had subjected him to habitual sufferings, acquired from this such a degree of sharpness in his humours, that they had produced an abundance of bile in him, ever ready to overflow. His disposition was become gloomy, fiery, satirical, unmoved by any kind of pleasure. He had an extreme desire of distinguishing himself; and this passion, so imperious upon minds susceptible of it's energy, was, in him, the substitute to all other enjoyments. Devoured with the thirst of sway, he had put himself at the head of the Jansenist party, although he laughed at them in his heart. In that capacity he had been distinguished, at the time of the exile of 1754: he remembered the Mont St. Michel, and that recollection supported him in an immense labour, under which one would have imagined that his frail constitution must have sunk. He undertook to look over, to examine, and to discuss all the titles of that undigested mass of papers deposited by the Jesuits; he extracted from thence the account of the origin, progress, and present state of the Society; he represented it as a dreadful Colossus, which, with it's two arms, embraced Europe and America, and affected an empire over the whole universe. He prevailed so much upon the Chambers assembled, by the bitter eloquence of his account, that the Parliament *smote the image upon his feet, which were of clay,* and

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in an instant that enormous mass, which terrified by it's power, was no longer frightful but by it's ruins.

We must not, however, omit any circumstance. The Abbé Chauvelin would never have succeeded in his vast design, if he had not been supported by the Duke de Choiseul, who encouraged him in his endeavours, and gave weight to his speeches. This Minister, of an active, and bold turn of mind, endeavouring to effect revolutions, not only in the Courts, and in the States, but also in the minds of the people—whose mode of thinking was liberal, and unrestrained by prejudices—had been acknowledged by the modern Philosophers, whose sect was beginning to acquire much consistence, as worthy to be their protector; and he justified their choice, by his zeal for the propagation of their doctrine. One of their principles was the extirpation of Monks, and the destruction of convents, the asylums of ignorance and bigotry. The Duke de Choiseul was sensible that he could not succeed in this, as long as the Jesuits subsisted. Although they despised the Monks, among whom they would not be classed, they considered them as the militia of the Church, and were aware of the danger there would be in suffering them to be suppressed, or even lessened. It was therefore necessary to begin by them. Besides, this Nobleman had a personal dislike to the Order, and was feared by them. During his embassy at Rome, he had had occasion to discover their prying spirit of intrigue. In a word, the circumstances that were passing in Spain, and especially in Portugal, rendered the opportunity as favourable as he could wish, for the execution of his project. They were accused of

1768.3 Sept.
1758.

having made themselves Kings over the Indians of Paraguay, to have fomented there the division between the respective subjects of the two Crowns, to have excited a war and to have made head against the combined armies of those Sovereigns, and to have been guilty of *the most extraordinary and unheard-of enormities*. Accordingly, his most Faithful Majesty, considering them as abettors and instigators of the assassination attempted on his person—published a kind of manifesto against them, wherein he declared them notorious rebels, traitors, real enemies, and aggressors, as much in former times as at present, against his Royal person, his dominions, the public peace of his kingdoms, and signories, and of the common good of his faithful subjects *—he declared them *outlawed, proscribed, and exterminated*—commanded that they should be expelled from his dominions, and, in fact, caused them to be conveyed immediately into those of the Pope, that he might do what he pleased with them. Spain had not yet carried matters to such extremity, but her Ministry was desirous of it, and the example of France might have great influence over her. The Duke de Choiseul, who was forming his family-compact with that Court, wished, at the same time that he was satisfying his private resentment, to do something that would be agreeable to them. Lewis XV. had also received a blow; and when any attempt was made upon the life of a King, it must, of course, be laid to the charge of the Jesuits. So general a prepossession was, in the minds of the prejudiced persons, a suffi-

* Expressions translated from the edict for the expulsion of the Jesuits from Portugal, the 3d September, 1759.

1768.

cient motive for their expulsion. The more effectually to succeed in this attempt, that monstrous volume of the pretended assertions of their casuists and other writers was put in order, and it was inferred from it, that they taught a murderous and abominable doctrine, not only injurious to the security and the life of the citizens, but even to that of the sacred persons of Sovereigns. The storm was violent, and yet the Jesuits would have escaped, if their conduct had been as versatile as it was represented; if by a dissimulation, contrary indeed to religious simplicity, but prescribed by that worldly prudence, which it was said they possessed in so superior a degree, they would have conformed themselves to the times, to places, to circumstances, and to persons; if their General had not displayed an inflexibility, which ought never to be assumed but by an upright man, and which should, at least, be the attribute of a great and heroic mind.

The Jesuits had scarce any open and declared enemies against them at Court, except the Duke de Choiseul, and the Marchioness de Pompadour, whom the Duke had subdued. Perhaps they might even have regained her favour, by seizing with address a proper opportunity of paying their court to her. But they could not have done this, without incurring the displeasure of the Queen, of the Dauphin and Dauphiness, and of all the Royal Family, who protected them. The King, perfectly convinced of their innocence with regard to the attempt committed against his person, was, as usual, the most indifferent person in this contest. He therefore gave way to the solicitations of the favourite intercessors, in behalf of the Society, who surrounded him; and the Duke de Choiseul, too subtle to offend these au-

1768.

Declara-
tion of 2
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gust personages directly, made no opposition. His Majesty was given to understand, that the Parliament was taking hasty strides, and that it was not right to leave the accused entirely at the discretion of the Magistrates, whose animosity against the Jesuits could not be unknown. An order was therefore issued, that, for the space of a twelvemonth, nothing should be either positively or provisionally decided upon any matter which concerned the institution, constitution, and establishment of the houses of the Society; and a Committee, taken from the Members of the Council, was appointed to examine the parts of this famous cause. Undoubtedly they were not so decisive, for these Gentlemen, before they pronounced, proposed the four following questions:

" 1°. Of what use are the Jesuits in France, with respect to the several functions in which they are employed?"

" 2°. What is their doctrine upon the several articles in question, the Regicide, the Ultramontane opinions, the liberties of the Gallican church, and the four articles of the Clergy?"

" 3°. What is their conduct in the interior of their houses, and what use do they make of their privileges, with regard to the Bishops and the Curates?"

" 4°. What means can be used to remedy the excessive authority exerted by their General over the persons who compose this Society?"

The members of the Committee were desirous of having the opinion of the Clergy upon these several points. Twelve Prelates were appointed to answer them; and the result of their decision was, that it was necessary, not to extinguish, but to regulate the existence of the Jesuits in France.

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France. A plan of accommodation was drawn up, and sent to the Pope, and the General, but the latter refused to accede to any, and replied with haughtiness, *Sint ut sunt, aut non sint* *. The decree of proscription immediately ensued. The Parliament declared in it the Bulls, Briefs, Constitutions, and other regulations of the Society, called of Jesus, to be incroachments of authority; pronounced that there were abuses in them; dissolved the Society; forbade the Jesuits to wear the habit of the Order—to live under the obedience of the General, and other Superiors of the said Society—to keep up a correspondence, either directly or indirectly, with them—to quit the houses dependent upon the Order—and forbade their living in a community; reserving to themselves the right of granting to each of them, upon their petitions, the pensions necessary for their subsistence, and interdicting to them the possession of any Prebends, Livings, Pulpits, or any other clerical or municipal offices, without having previously taken the oath prescribed in the said decree.

Les ci-devant soi disant Jesuites †—for this was the burlesque denomination given to them in future—urged powerful arguments against this decree of death, which they represented as an act of monstrous iniquity. They exclaimed—for our impartiality obliges us to give an account equally of the memorials of the two parties—they exclaimed, that a hundred formalities had been omitted in their condemnation, the omission of one of which would have

* Let them be as they are, or not be.

† *The formerly self-entitled Jesuits.*

1768.

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rendered the sentence void against the meanest individual. Undoubtedly, the most essential fault, was that of not having heard nor summoned them, and in an instance, too, when the state, the life, and the honour of four thousand individuals was at stake, when they were accused of being assassins, poisoners, and regicides ! Upon what motives were they condemned ? Upon an institution extolled in the Bulls of twenty Sovereign Pontiffs ;—upon constitutions, master-pieces of government, the empire of which, at most, was only extended to the interior management of the Order, and could not deprive the civil laws of the coercive authority over these Priests, as subjects ;—upon a collection of assertions, some of which were only the defence and unfolding of the natural right, a right engraven in the heart of man ; besides, being conformable to several others of the same kind, which might have been extracted from the remonstrances even of the Magistrates themselves ; while others were only erroneous maxims of superstition and fanaticism, common, in times of confusion and ignorance, to every religious Order, to all the Clergy, and almost to the whole Church ;—the assemblage of which, in a word, had been formed without being examined, without contradiction from the accused, with a degree of treachery, precipitation, and negligence, which would be very apparent to any body, who would take the trouble to employ themselves in a trifling and tedious examination, and which, for that very reason, required the greatest coolness, and the nicest circumspection. They were still more severe with their enemies ; they asked where their crimes were attested ? who were their accusers, the proofs, and

1768.

and the witnesses? In Portugal, a King was assassinated; the Jesuits Alexander, Mathos, and Malagrida, were arrested, detained, and condemned; but on account of all crimes, except that one which was the essential grievance that occasioned the intire expulsion of the Order. In France, Damiens had not accused them in the least, at the time of the assassination of Lewis XV. He appeared, on the contrary, to be entirely devoted to the Magistrates, whom he had dared to solicit the King to recall. He had cursed the Archbishop, and his obstinacy, concerning which he had declared, that he was desirous of opening his Majesty's eyes; the first words he had uttered had been, *Save the Dauphin!* as if the life of that Prince was in danger; while it was the interest of the Jesuits to have him upon the throne, and that it could only be for his sake, that they should have committed this horrid regicide. If Damiens, in his private interrogatories, had revealed any thing concerning this plot, how could the Judges have remained five years in so culpable a security? Why, since they ventured to destroy the whole Order, upon vague and chimerical declarations, had they been afraid of avenging their Sovereign of the outrageous attempt of some individuals, whom they could not suffer to live, without becoming accomplices, and responsible for all the misfortunes which might still happen? The circumstance which they more especially considered as the highest excess of tyranny, was the making their subsistence the price of their infamy, the forcing them to lie against their own consciences, by taking an oath to detest an institution which they had embraced as sacred, and which they still considered in the same light.

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This oath was the more ridiculously contrived, as, according to the moral doctrine of the Society, established in the book of the assertions, those members who should have baseness to take it, ought to be most suspected, as they could not be any thing else than traitors, perjured, and hypocrites. For, in fact, what dependence could be placed upon men who were represented as Proteus, always essentially the same, under whatever form they disguised themselves; as a perverse generation, whom no correction could amend, and whose repentance could never be manifested by any certain signs? The only step to be taken with them, was to expel them, without any terms or restrictions, as the King of Portugal had done; who, in that particular at least, had acted with much more consistency.

November
1768.

The Parliaments of Rouen and Rennes had been the first to follow the example set them by that of Paris. Some Parliaments were more tardy; that of Flanders could not resolve to do an act which they considered as unjust, against Fathers with whose conduct they were edified. To put a stop to these various opinions, the Duke de Choiseul at length caused an edict to be issued by his Majesty, which ordered, that the Society of the Jesuits should no more exist in the kingdom; permitting, however, the members that composed it to live in the King's dominions as private individuals, under the spiritual authority of the Ordinaries on the spot, and conforming themselves to the laws of the kingdom.

The manner with which this rigorous law was softened, was a certain proof, that policy alone, or rather weakness, directed the steps of the Court, especially that they were in no dread of those *assassins*,
poisoners,

1768.

poisoners, or *regicides*: the Court swarmed with Jesuits; they still remained Confessors of the King, the Dauphin, the Queen, and all the Royal Family; there were few Courtiers who had not taken one of them in his house, and it was the fashion to have a Jesuit in the family. M. de Voltaire, the mimic of the great Noblemen, had one likewise; it is true, that it was in order to subject him to all his caprices, to torment him, and cruelly to dismiss him at the end of a few years, when he found him of no further use.

The most remarkable consequence of the expulsion of the Society, and which it's bigots did not fail to consider as a punishment from God, was, that those creditors who had occasioned the catastrophe, were the first victims of it. They had been regularly paid, since brother Gatin had begun to make arrangements with them, till the moment when, at length despairing of being able to avert the storm with which they were threatened, the Jesuits ceased to do honour to the engagements they had entered into, in order to attend entirely to their own personal interest. It would no doubt have been acting more heroically to receive the blow with resignation, trusting to Providence, and neglecting those precautions, which indeed the violation of all laws with respect to them seemed to authorize, but which was prohibited by the doctrine of religious self-denial. Their conduct was not regulated upon this principle, and it must be acknowledged, there are few among the number that condemned them, who would not have acted as they did. They gave way to the natural instinct, which prescribes to man to take care of his own preservation, at any rate or peril; and therefore the walls

1768. walls of the Jesuits were the only parts of their property remaining to take an inventory of.

To this first loss, must be added a number of bills of exchange, fraudulently drawn, as it was pretended * by foreign Jesuits, who, becoming creditors to themselves, diminished by so much more the share of the real creditors; so that the debts of the Society, which in the beginning amounted to only three millions †, were increased to nine ‡. This produced a dreadful train of actions, a labyrinth of chicanery, in which the most able lawyers were lost. In a word, it became a *direction*, that is to say, an abundant harvest for Attornies, Advocates, Judges, and all the members of justice employed, who enriched themselves; and a source of ruin to the creditors, who spent their principal in costs, and cursed the Parliament infinitely more than the Jesuits.

The Magistrates themselves had occasion, if not to repent, at least not to applaud themselves much on their triumph. They experienced, that if there is no such thing as a petty foe, there is nothing more formidable than an enemy driven to extremities, and reduced to the excess of despair. By the sequel of events we shall see that the Jesuits, in their highest degree of power and splendor, never did them such material injury, as in their state of abjection and annihilation. Even the Jansenists themselves, so proud of their fall, perceived too late that their own consistency depended upon that of their rivals, and seemed to endeavour, from time to time, to suppose

* See sixth letter to a provincial.

† One hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds.

‡ Three hundred and seventy five thousand pounds.

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them brought to life again, that, by combating a phantom, they might recover the consequence they had lost.

In general, the most considerable and the wisest part of the kingdom regretted the Jesuits. To that sentiment of pity usually excited by unfortunate people, was added a sentiment of gratitude. Almost all the generation of that time had been educated by them: it is seldom that we do not preserve to our masters some remains of that veneration and respect with which they have inspired us. The Jesuits, more than any other instructors, possessed the talent of exciting these sentiments; and among their judges, a few incendiaries excepted, they reckoned a great many partisans, who were forced to esteem them, and inwardly to do them justice. In fact, if this great cause had been pleaded with all the preparation and importance which it deserved, the Jesuits might have said to the Magistracy: "Before ye condemn us, O ye, whose hearts and minds we have formed, answer our expostulations: we appeal to the opinion you must have entertained of us, at an age, the candour and innocence of which were certainly as well adapted to enable you to form a sound decision upon such matters, as the knowledge you have since acquired. Answer our questions: Have we ever attempted in our schools, in our conversations, in our tribunals of confession, to inculcate into you any of those abominable maxims with which we are reproached? Have you ever heard us propagate them? Have you read them in the books which we have put into your hands? Have you observed in our domestic conduct any thing analogous to such a mode of thinking? Is it upon
"works

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 " dead people that you are to pronounce—or upon
 " our doctrine, now existing and avowed—upon us,
 " lately your masters, and still in possession of col-
 " leges, pulpits, and confessionals, under the sanction
 " of two authorities, with the approbation of the
 " Prelates, and the rewards of the Sovereign ?"

Alas! the Magistrates bred up under Lewis the Great said all these things to themselves; they agreed to them in private; but as soon as they were seated upon the *flowers-de-luce*, they forgot them, led astray by fanatics, who were their brethren. A few only ventured to give an asylum to their antient prefects, and imagined that they made amends for their weakness by this act of humanity. There was one observation to be made upon these refugee Jesuits, that might have been apparent to any one who would have attended to it; which was, that with their gown they seemed to have lost all their merit. They were no longer the same persons; whether it were that this habit was a kind of talisman, the magic illusion of which kept people in awe, made them appear in a greater light to vulgar eyes, and set off their talents to the best advantage; or whether their being stripped of it betrayed their inability, and that they really did not possess the genius, the resources, and the vigour which was attributed to them. La Tour, Neuville, Montigny, Geoffroy Berthur, discovered nothing but pusillanimity, and were observed to cry like women. But we repeat it once more, they recovered all their energy when they had an opportunity to avenge themselves.

In the midst of so many misfortunes with which they were overwhelmed, the first consolation the Jesuits

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suits enjoyed, was to hear the clamours of the provinces, which complained that since their expulsion the colleges were forsaken in several places, neglected in most parts, and no where so well maintained as by these instructors. Even the Philosophers—who, considering nothing in that event but the good of humanity, and the advancement of knowledge, had flattered themselves that advantages would be taken of this circumstance, to alter and improve the education of youth, against which they had for a long while exclaimed—discovered that the only motive of the Parliament had been to satisfy their personal animosity, and that they had never in view so laudable and patriotic a design. Skilful in destroying, they knew not how to rebuild; the tedious and barren routine of the classes were not improved; the masters were persons of no estimation, or servile mercenaries; and the scholars continued to pass the prime of their life in disgust, lamentation, and wearisomeness.

The critical situation in which the Courts of Magistracy were soon placed, by murmurs of another kind, and more general, giving an opportunity to the Jesuits to intrigue with success, contributed still to increase their hopes. M. de Bertin had succeeded M. de Silhouette as Comptroller General, and the joy of having got rid of the latter, who was, however, undoubtedly possessed of a greater share of knowledge and theory than the former, rendered him for a time agreeable to the nation. He was a man of a mild disposition, a friend to palliative remedies, not foreseeing the more considerable and incurable evils that might result from them. He withdrew those legislative acts of his predecessor, which had occasioned the greatest clamours; and

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though he substituted to them a third *Kingsdem*, a double and triple increase of the capitation, as well as an additional penny * per livre † upon the customs of the farms, yet as those taxes were judged less intolerable than the cruel edict of subsidy, which had excited such great alarms, he acquired the credit of exerting a less degree of tyranny. Besides, every thing was laid to the charge of M. de Silhouette, who, by the irreparable mischief he had done to public credit and confidence, had rendered these resources necessary. The Magistrates, more cool than the people—who were transported with a transitory delirium of joy—ought to have weighed in their Assembly the enormous burthen of the taxes, which was not yet known. Entirely taken up with their private quarrels, they neglected to stipulate the interests of the nation, and registered without making any difficulty. In this manner they registered a multitude of loans, and did not in the least examine what use was to be made of them; they did not examine who was to pay the interest, how it was to be paid, or even whether it would be paid. Dupes were found who brought in their money, and that was sufficient. The Parliament were left at liberty quietly to torment the Jesuits, and, to reward them for their complaisance, their ridiculous vanity was for an instant gratified.

The Parliament of Besançon, which had more vigour than that of Paris, and especially more patriotism, was agitated with an intestine division, on account of those same taxes, which they had refused to

* A halfpenny.

† Ten pence.

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ster, and the greatest and best part of it's members were banished. Thirty of them had detached themselves from their Chief, who, by a monstrous abuse, united at the same time in his person, the incompatible functions of First President and Commissary for the province, that is to say, Intendant. This Chief, who was M. de Boynes, had at the same time an indelible stain fixed upon him, in the eyes of the Magistracy, from having been Attorney General in the *Chambre Royale*. All the Parliaments, therefore, interested themselves for that of Besançon; and, when the King made answer to that of Paris, that this affair did not concern them, he advanced a system, which, if it was not ancient, had at least something specious in it, and would marvellously have increased the consequence of the Magistracy, if they could have availed themselves of it. They answered—that the affair was entirely personal to them, since all the Parliaments composed only one body, divided into several classes. Those of Provence did not fail to adopt with avidity a plan of union, which increased their consequence, and assimilated them to the Court of Peers. Eight of them seconded the intreaties of this last. The Council would not adopt this pretention; they combated it by writings; but, however, soon giving way, furnished an opportunity to the Magistrates of extending it. The King recalled the exiled officers of the Parliament of Franche Comté, and gave them satisfaction, by withdrawing M. de Boynes from that Court, in order to appoint him Counsellor of State.

This ephemeral triumph of the Magistrates was followed, as was imagined by clear-sighted persons, with a fresh sacrifice of the national interest. In a Bed of Justice holden, by making the King break

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his most solemn promises, the second *Vingtieme*, which was to cease immediately upon the cessation of hostilities, was prolonged for six years. Other burthens were substituted to the suppression of the third *Vingtieme*, the result of which was, that the subjects were to pay more in time of peace than they did in time of war, more especially as the taxes substituted were to begin immediately, while those that were suppressed were to be collected for upwards of six months to come. In a word, the people were imposed upon, by announcing the sincere views of reducing all the imposts to a contribution, equitable, constant, and proportioned to the value and produce of their property: a vague operation, and an idle phantom, intended to deceive them by the delusive prospect of advantageous changes in future, that they might be induced to support, with less impatience, the enormous burthen of the taxes that had been preserved. Persons who were the most inclined to judge favourably of the intentions of Government, could not avoid thinking in this manner, when they read the capricious dispositions of the edict, in which, very far from reforming the abuses the Courts had so long complained of, they were only endeavoured to be palliated, and perpetuated, by disorder and confusion, by arbitrary and clandestine proceedings.

If the Parliament had been really animated with that spirit of patriotic zeal which they pretended to have; if, in the affairs of the nation, they had exerted the same warmth as in those which concerned their dignity, or the private passions of some of their members, this was undoubtedly the opportunity to refuse the registering of any thing, to declare themselves incapable of it, to solicit, without ceasing, the convoca-
tion

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tion of the general States of the kingdom; and, till that should be effected, to oppose, by confining themselves to their real functions, the imposition of taxes, as extraordinary as they were odious. The Court of Aids was instigated by higher motives; and, instead of receiving, as usual, the example from the Parliament, had given it to them*; but in vain. The Parliament suffered themselves to be again seduced, by the favours which were bestowed upon some of their members very opportunely, who appeared to be let into the secret of Administration, by the choice that was made of a Comptroller General, taken from among them, and by the recent confirmation of a distinction of which they became every day more vain.

The pusillanimity of M. Bertin—which had not allowed him to refuse the part he was forced to act, in rendering him the instrument of the oppression of France, at a time when he ought to have enabled her to taste the sweets of peace—made him at the same time tremble at the report of the clamours which arose on all sides. He thought to quiet them; on one hand, by shewing, that at a time when the States was teeming with projects of reformation and improvement, he was seriously engaged in this salutary business; and, on the other hand, by seeming to attend to the expostulations of the Magistrates, and softening the rigorous laws against which they exclaimed. Accordingly, he caused a declaration from the King to be carried to the Parliament—given upon the representations of the Courts, in interpretation of the edicts of the preceding month of May—in which,

* In the articles of their remonstrances, settled the 6th of June, 1763.

1768. while he expatiated with satisfaction upon the general prospect with which the people were still decoyed, it was announced, that the King suppressed the one per cent. settled at the last Bed of Justice, upon landed estates; diminished the duration of the *Vingtieme*, and of the grants of the towns; and was taking measures for paying off the debts of the State.

The same day letters patent were registered, which contained the establishment of a Committee, consisting of Magistrates, to examine into the means of obtaining a better administration of the finances.

The people were too outrageous to be satisfied with deceitful promises. The clamours of the nation continuing, the Duke de Choiseul, who wished to conciliate the Parliament, was the first to advise that M. Bertin should be succeeded by a Counsellor of that Court. Madame de Pompadour adopted the scheme; and the astonishment was great, when it was known at Paris, that M. de Laverdy, a fiery Jansenist, one of the most violent adversaries of the Jesuits, was Comptroller General. This was no disgrace to his predecessor; it was even an honourable retreat, which the Court contrived for him. The fourth office of Secretary of State, which had been suppressed, was re-established, and a department of all the minute parts of the others was formed for him; a trifling administration, very analogous to his trifling turn of mind.

The choice of the King opened the career of ambition to all the Gentlemen, and there was not a young Counsellor of Inquests who did not flatter himself to be able one day to govern the State.

This

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This delirium intoxicated the Parliament to such a degree, as to make them forget the favourite system they had conceived, and suddenly to lose sight of their best interests. The Parliaments of the provinces had conducted themselves with infinitely more propriety in the affair of the imposts. They had opposed a courageous resistance to illegal proscriptions, and braved the menaces and the barbarity of several Commandants at the head of those military expeditions. Among these, the Duke de Fitz-James had particularly signalized himself in Languedoc, and had carried the excess of despotism so far as to put the members of the Parliament of Toulouse under an arrest in their houses. It was upon this occasion that his son, having met the Marquis de Royan, who had just been dining in a house where there were several of them, asked him, whether, since those Gentlemen had been cooped up, he found them fatter? *No*, answered he, drily, *but they appeared very great to me*. This vigorous reply occasioned a duel between these two Noblemen, in which the former was wounded. However this may be, this Company could not be kept for ever in such a situation: it became necessary to restore them to their functions; and their first care was to issue a warrant for personally apprehending their tyrant. But as he was a Peer, who had a right to be judged by his Peers, and as the most natural and readiest mode of calling him up was near the person of the King, the Parliament of Toulouse referred the whole proceeding to that of Paris, in order that *the trial of the Duke de Fitz-James might be continued, finished, and completed*. It

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was impossible to behave with more moderation and attention. The Ministers, however, thinking this a favourable opportunity of creating dissensions among the Magistracy, advised his Majesty to permit the Princes, Dukes, and Peers, to go to the *Palais*, to acknowledge the Parliament of the capital to be eminently and solely the essential Court of Peers; and accordingly, to give them to understand, that the Magistrates of Toulouse had encroached upon their rights. The vanity of the Counsellors of Paris, seduced or intoxicated with the persuasive words of the Monarch, made them avail themselves of so precious an acknowledgment from him. Without any regard to the system of unity which they had so recently adopted, they annulled the proceedings of the Parliament of Toulouse, and declared that body not competent to take cognizance of an affair concerning a member of the Peerage.

After this, by an effusion of gratitude for the favour they had received from the Court, they had the complaisance not to follow up the proceedings against the Duke de Fitz-James, and to suffer him to enjoy his triumph, without even attainting him, as they did some years after with respect to the Duke d'Aiguillon. This attempt against the rights of the other Parliaments, awakened their zeal: almost all of them issued decrees, containing protests against the pretention of the Parliament of Paris. Even the latter, having recovered from their first enthusiasm, endeavoured to correct what was alarming in their decision, by acknowledging, that their dignity of sole and only Court of Peers,

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ought not to dissolve the fraternity between members who all composed one and the same corps. Sensible men laughed at this inconsistency, and several of the Parliaments were so much exasperated at it, that they renounced an association, which only procured them the burden, without letting them enjoy the honours.

The Magistracy, having lost by this want of unity, a part of the strength they had acquired for ten or twelve years past, their enemies redoubled their efforts against them. They exaggerated to the Court the incroachments, the usurpations, which they every day made upon authority; they represented them to the people, as thinking of nothing but their own grandeur, and neglecting the rights and interests of the nation, whenever their resistance could call in question either their liberty or their prerogatives. In a word, they endeavoured more and more to foment the discord between the several Parliaments, being convinced, that the only method to destroy them, was to attack them one after the other. They at length succeeded, by this management; but after a great deal of perseverance, a variety of intrigues, difficulties, and commotions: before that great event took place, several years elapsed, each of them fertile in facts worthy of the attention of the reader.

Among the fatal consequences of the unfortunate war which was just concluded, we must reckon two trials, which might be called national causes, and which engaged for a long while the attention of the public. That of the Canadians first began. Towards the end of the war, the Government, fatigued with the murmurs and complaints which

1768. came from all parts, in order to quiet in some degree the ferment occasioned by so many disasters, losses, and faults, determined to make an example. But, too weak to attack the abuses in their source, and to punish the great criminals, they sought for victims who were not so powerfully surrounded, and whose punishment, however, would be likely to make an impression by their posts, and by the nature and number of their crimes. M. Berryer, who acted with the same precautions, and who, naturally harsh and ill-natured, was often held back by the fear of doing an injury to himself, found every thing that was required in the Chiefs and Administrators of Canada.

Before the loss of this colony, he had often received memorials, setting forth the deplorable state it was in: "the whole country," it was said, "is ready to bear testimony of the malversations, which have been and are daily committed in it. You may judge of them from the large supplies you have sent, and the extreme indigence we are oppressed with. You may judge of them from the rapid fortunes they have given rise to; fortunes raised at the expence of the King; who has exhausted his coffers to nourish us, and give us strength to fight in his cause, while we are perishing with famine, and these men are feeding themselves fat upon our substance." The Minister, already enraged at the enormity of the sums his predecessors had granted, as well as those which he was obliged to remit, in spite of his plan of general oeconomy—and still more at the debts that remained to be pay'd, even after the loss of the colony—and being besides informed, beyond a possibility of doubt,

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to what an excess the evil had grown up, (for both principals and subalterns had given him an account of them, in hopes of exculpating themselves, and fixing the blame upon others) began by making a direct attack upon the Intendant. This was M. Bigot, a man of high birth, son of a Counsellor, who died Subdean of the Parliament of Bourdeaux, and grandson of the principal Register of that body, a near relation of the Count de Marville. That Minister had given him a place in the civil department of the navy, and his younger brother was employed in the military branch. The eldest, after having passed through the first places in that line, was appointed by the Count de Maurepas, Directing Commissary at Louisbourg. He was there in the year 1745, when that fortress fell into the hands of the enemy, and was accused at that time of having been in part the cause of the mutiny of the garrison; who were enraged at seeing others appropriating to themselves the fruits of their labours, by depriving them of the pay, which the King allowed for building and repairing the fortifications. As the complaint, however, lay equally against the Governor and the inferior officers, who must therefore have been included in the process—as the Minister was a mild man, an enemy to noise, and not ready to give into all reports—and likewise as there would have been a good deal of difficulty, perhaps an impossibility, to get at proofs of a fact, in which all the principal officers were combined against the soldiers—in a word, as the lustre of France at that time extinguished even its disgraces, the accusation was dropped, and M. Bigot, at the peace, was appointed

1768. ed Intendant of New France. Unfortunately, he acquired by impunity only more resolution to commit misdemeanours, in a colony, where, by it's distance from the metropolis—with which it has not any communication during eight months in the year—a great man has necessarily almost an unlimited authority. The number of posts it consists of, so remote from each other, are equally favourable to his private schemes and machinations; and that mercantile turn, which the office itself requires, increases of course, and may even give birth to rapaciousness, in a heart susceptible of that passion. The exchange of various European commodities for skins, and other merchandise, the produce of the country—the presents for the savages—the subsistence of the troops and inhabitants—all which depends almost entirely upon the Intendant, to whom the supplies from Europe are consigned, form a detail so complicated, as not to be developed by an ordinary man, and furnish a most specious and advantageous cloak to fraud. M. Bigot had availed himself of his opportunities with such success, that he was become very rich, and with him many others, because this detention of public money cannot be effected without the co-operation of assistants, agents, and understrappers, who are all equally active, sometimes even more so than their principals. But the principals are commonly the objects of attention and complaint. M. Bigot was absurd enough not even to conceal his riches, and to keep up the most splendid and extravagant appearance in the midst of universal distress. In the time of the greatest scarcity he had a table of twenty covers,

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covers, a table sufficient for the maintenance of two hundred colonists. M. Berryer, informed of the luxury and prodigality of the Intendant, had written to him in these terms: "I beg of you to reflect seriously on the manner, in which that part of the administration, which is intrusted to you, has been conducted; it is of more importance than you imagine." The hint was thrown away; having escaped a more pressing danger in the affair of Louisbourg, where he was expressly accused by all the troops of the colony, he flattered himself with a more easy escape, at a time when the continual changes in the Ministry were likely soon to rid him of so troublesome a spy upon his actions. Add to this, that, being far richer than he was before, he had more certain and more powerful means of justification to a corrupt Court; and the general confusion of affairs was likely to cast so thick a veil over his malversations, that he thought it impossible for any one to betray him. Encouraged by such a number of resources, he left Canada, and, notwithstanding the menacing letters of the Minister, repaired to Versailles: he waited upon him, and demanded payment for bills of exchange, which he brought with him, representing them as the more sacred, as being the produce of his own appointments, which he had laid out in corn and provisions for the colony. Not daunted by the silence of the Minister, he produced part of his wealth to public view; he disposed of his money, purchased lands, and displayed his magnificence even at the gates of Versailles. In the midst of this apparent security, the detention of Cadet, Commissary General of provisions in Canada, involved him; on the accusation

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1768. of this prisoner, he was arrested, and conducted to the Bastille. A month after, there appeared letters patent, in the preamble of which it was set forth; "that the King had been informed of monopolies, abuses, vexations, and prevarications, committed in his North American colonies, and particularly in that of Canada, from which great injury had arisen to the said colonies, and many of the inhabitants had been ruined; and that these crimes were the more deserving of punishment, as some of the persons suspected had made use of the name and authority of his Majesty, to effect them." After this declaration, the King ordered a Committee of the Chatelet to try the authors, accomplices, abettors, and persons concerned in the said crimes, which included upwards of fifty guilty people of every rank, among which was the Governor, the Intendant, seventeen Commandants of posts, two Commissaries of the navy, one Counsellor in the Council superior of Quebec, &c. In general, these Committees are odious; but they are less so, when the members of them are chosen from among the ordinary Judges. Besides, in a trial so long, and so complicated as this was, it was necessary to endeavour to abridge the judicial formalities, and it was not possible to interrupt the whole course of justice, for an inquiry which might last some years. The President of this Committee was to be M. de Sartine, then Lieutenant of Police, who, from the nature of his place, from the spirit of cunning of which he was naturally possessed, and which he had manifested in a particular manner upon this occasion, and from the several interrogatories which he had already put to the principal persons

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persons accused, seemed the one of the Chiefs of the Chatelet the most proper for this function. M. Dupont, Counsellor at the Chatelet, was the Recorder; and it would have been difficult to find a Magistrate more enlightened in such matters, more upright, better acquainted with forms, more possessed of the spirit of order, detail, and chicanery, necessary for the purpose, and especially endowed with a more indefatigable share of patience. The King's Attorney was not so much liked; he was full of wit, but his probity being already too much suspected, appeared likely to give way to a temptation too difficult for him to be exposed to, even had it been more confirmed: he had been appointed Attorney General of the commission. The trying of this cause, upon the event of which, France, Europe, and even America, were attentive, lasted three years. The sentence did not answer to the concern the public took in it. Upon the whole, a restitution, was ordered to the King of about twelve millions *. The Marquis de Vaudreuil stood acquitted of the accusation, and in his own person he deserved it: but his weakness, both with respect to his colleague the Intendant, whose extortions he could not be ignorant of, as well as to the officers more immediately subject to his orders, was highly reprehensible. M. Bigot, the Intendant—Varin, Directing Commissary at Montreal—and Breard, Comptroller of the navy at Quebec, being convicted of having tolerated, encouraged, and themselves committed, during their administration, the abuses, misdemeanors, prevarications, and embezzlements in

* Five hundred thousand pounds.

that

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that part of finances mentioned in the trial, were only punished with banishment; some officers were merely admonished, though judged to have been privy to the robberies committed against the King; and to have partaken of them. But the most astonishing instance was that of M. Pean, the Town Major, who, though condemned to a restitution of six hundred thousand livres * to the King, was not stigmatized with the smallest mark of infamy. The Commissioners apologized for the mildness of their sentence, upon the ground that there was no law existing which gave them authority to pronounce sentence of death in such a case. Yet they might at least have compared the crime of the Canadians with that of domestic theft; and every one knows, that a poor maid-servant, who steals a napkin from her mistress, is hanged for it. As to the restitution of the twelve millions †, which was ordered, there is great reason to think that scarce any part of it ever came into the King's coffers. Cadet, the Commissary General, was to pay in six millions ‡ for his share; but he had a demand upon Government for ten or eleven ||. To settle the account, he was re-instated in his office; and M. Gerbier, his Advocate, was the person who profited most by this business; his fees amounted to three hundred thousand livres §. Pennisseault, his clerk, had had the precaution to provide himself with a pretty wife, who had had the

* Twenty-five thousand pounds.

† Five hundred thousand pounds.

‡ Two hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

|| From four hundred thousand to upwards of four hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

§ Twelve thousand five hundred pounds.

good

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good fortune to make herself agreeable to the Duke de Choiseul, she obtained for her husband letters of justification, which exculpated him totally, and preserved to him the fraudulent acquisitions he had been forced to give up. One of Breard's sons afterwards married a relation of this Minister. The Intendant only, who was judged with so much severity, was one, who being an old batchelor, and having neither wife nor daughter to prostitute, was therefore obliged to submit to his punishment, without ever being able to return to France.

The trial of M. Lally, which we have already announced, began later, and lasted longer. The person accused was much more considerable, and his accusers were not only the public administration, but all India, of which the latter was only the agent. The basis of the accusation was a petition presented to the King, by the Governor and the Superior Council of Pondicherry, upon their return, wherein, complaining that they had been injured to excess, in their honour and in their reputation, by the imputations of M. de Lally, they demanded justice from his Majesty, and a tribunal which might render it to them.

3 Aug.
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This petition was supported by a memorial, tending to prove, "That the Council, and the unfortunate colony of India, had been crushed, from the beginning to the end, by the authority of a despotic master, who had never known the rules of prudence, honour, nor even of humanity,—that Count Lally alone was accountable for all the direction and administration of the Company, both within and without, and for all the revenues, estates, and dependencies of which they were
" possessed

1768. "possessed,—that he was accountable for the loss
 "of Pondicherry, since the town had only surren-
 "dered for want of provisions, and that he only
 "was in possession of the means to procure some,
 "namely, the money to buy them, the profits of
 "the lands, the produce of the harvest, and the
 "troops to protect them." In a word, nine capital
 articles were brought against him in this memorial,
 proving, according to the accusers, more than inca-
 pacity.

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M. de Lally, informed that those complaints were
 attended to at Court, repaired to Fontainebleau.
 He was told that it was in agitation to send him to
 the Bastille; this information did not intimidate
 him. He wrote a strong letter to the Duke de
 Choiseul, in which he declared, that he submitted
 his life and his innocence to the King. He was ar-
 rested; several months passed before he was interro-
 gated, and, if Madame de Pompadour had lived, he
 would perhaps have been released from his prison
 with glory, or at least with impunity.

By a singular incident, the affair was immediately
 put into a regular train of justice. A Jesuit—for
 some of them were to be found every where—named
 Father Lavaut, dying at the time of the subversion
 of the Society, at the India house, where he had
 obtained a lodging, as Missionary formerly in the
 service of the Company, the Parliament caused the
 seals to be put upon his lodgings. Among the
 papers of this apostolic Priest were found near one
 million two hundred thousand livres * in bills, and
 a memorial against Count Lally. An anecdote curi-

* Fifty thousand pounds.

1763.

ous enough, on this subject, is mentioned in the pleas of the Count, and deserves credit, as it is supported by the testimony of an eye-witness of the most respectable character *. The disciple of Ignatius, being a cautious man, and not knowing what might happen in Europe on the arrival of the General, who by his influence might intimidate, or confound his accusers, had drawn up two writings, either of which he meant to produce, according to circumstances. Although he was far from being interested in favour of Count Lally, the first of these writings, which was the one seen by the officer just mentioned, contained great eulogiums of the Count. The second presented the reverse of the medal. As soon as the Jesuit was assured of the progress and success of the plot formed against the prisoner, he probably burnt the apology, and only kept the libel. It was put into the hands of the Attorney General, who accused Count Lally of extortions, oppressions, abuses of authority, and even of high treason. A decree was issued, which referred the affair to the Chatelet, save under an appeal to the Court. Upon this the King, very wavering, according to custom, about the proper steps to be taken, and who suffered himself to be swayed by circumstances, caused some first letters patent to be expedited, the motive of which was the necessity of tracing the misfortunes in India to their source. His Majesty said in the preamble, "As in a great number of memorials presented to us, it has been said, that those losses, so multiplied, and at the

6 July,
1763.12 Jan.
1764.

* The Marquis de Montmorency, at present an officer in the Body Guards, and who has formerly served in India.

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"same time so fatal, had been occasioned by depredations, extortions, and embezzling of money, it behoves our justice, that those crimes should be inquired into by judicial proceedings." Thus, according to the literal acceptance of these patents, the inquiry tended only to discover the crime wherever it might exist. It was not directed specially against any particular person accused; it was to comprehend, in general, *all the crimes committed in India, with regard to the administration and the commerce of the Company, whether before or after the sending of the troops commanded by Count Lally*: and the Grand Chamber assembled was the tribunal designed to take cognizance of them. In these first letters we may still discover the protecting hand which supported Count Lally; but in the second, we see no more of it, because, in fact, it existed no longer*. In these he is indicated and named as the only, or at least the principal culprit; the rest to be taken notice of, were merely his accomplices and adherents. This was an essential point gained by his enemies, who, by this contrivance, invalidated the information of abuses made by the General, and, from being accused, became thus the accusers. The reason of this was—that they were at liberty;—that, being better acquainted than he, with the use that could be made of the enormous sums they had either acquired or purloined, they had distributed their gold with profusion;—in a

In April
1764.

* Madame de Pompadour did not indeed die, till the 15th of April, but she lingered for six weeks, and no more took the same interest in affairs as she would have done at another time.

word,

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word, that being united by the powerful motive of personal defence, they formed a confederacy not to be destroyed. It cannot otherwise be accounted for, that, among the multitude of dishonest servants of the India Company, who most of them returned immensely rich, when the Company itself was ruined—who were most of them indicated to Count Lally, at his departure, by the administration in Europe, as prevaricators, in a memorial, containing interesting particulars upon the character and qualifications of the several persons, with this frequent *clause* at the end of each article, *He does not forget himself there*—who were most of them acknowledged to be corrupt—who were informed against by the Chief, and denounced to that same Company for depredations, of which the Count pretended he had obtained proofs:—it cannot otherwise, let us repeat, be accounted for, that, among this multitude, not one man of them should have been punished, and that the sword of justice should only have fallen upon him, before whose arrival these enormities existed, and who was sent to discover and chastize them.

However this may be, after the enormous apparatus which such a trial required, the Recorder made his report, which was a master-piece, in the opinion of the Magistrates who heard it, but which, undoubtedly, contained many blunders, to a sailor, a soldier, or a geographer, who might read it. The Recorder was M. Pasquier, the same who had made the report of the affair of Damiens. He was very expert in the labyrinth and chicanery of the law, very dextrous and subtle; and at the same time was an old man, subject to prejudices, headstrong, violent, and choleric, and of a disposition totally oppo-

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site to the phlegmatic and dispassionate turn of the Recorder of the Canadians. M. de Lally had most of the same faults, which occasioned many warm contests between these two persons in the interrogatories. Among men of such a cast, the result is frequently a leaven, which ferments in secret, and which makes them very dangerous when they are Judges; and infinitely more so, if, when charged with the development of so intricate an affair, their report is not directed by the most precise impartiality. M. Pasquier has been reproached with this †. This Counsellor, however, could not produce any crime sufficiently positive, especially upon the matter of high treason, to subject the accused to the pain of death, by adhering to the letter of the law. But he represented to the Judges, that in a trial of this nature, beside the ordinary course of justice, which ought not to be of their competency, they must raise themselves above the law, enter into the spirit of the legislator, and, pronouncing according to the great views of Administration, make a striking example of an illustrious criminal. His colleagues, inflamed by his discourse, became sanguinary, and Count Lally was condemned to be beheaded. The manner in which he had been interrogated ought to have prepared him for this intelligence: stripped of his Grand Cross, of his Riband, and placed upon the stool, it followed, that the sentence of the Judges tended at least to corporal punishment. He could not bear up against this decree of infamy: covered with fourteen scars, how hard was his destiny, to fall into the

6 May,
1766.

† See the manuscript memorial of the Count de Tollendal, natural son of Count Lally.

hands of the executioner! When the sentence was read to him, at the chapel of the prison, not being able to contain himself for rage, he uttered the most horrid imprecations against heaven and earth, against his Judges, and especially against his Recorder. Then, assuming to appearance sentiments of resignation, he desired he might be allowed to pray, and in this interval, with the help of the point of a compass, which he had concealed in his great coat, he attempted to reach his heart. He was prevented, and deprived of the means of executing his project, which, at any rate, was not certainly well formed, for otherwise he would have taken a more effectual method. However this may be, the custom is, that as soon as a criminal has heard his sentence, he remains from that time in the possession of the executioner, who is personally responsible for him.

The King, previously informed of the fate of Count Lally, had acquainted the First President that the Parliament might proceed as they pleased; that he was not inclined to grant any pardon; and that, in order to prevent any kind of solicitation, he was going to shut himself up at Choisy, where access would be denied to every one. He had recommended, however, that while justice was to be satisfied, every respect should be paid to the criminal, consistent with his punishment. Accordingly, it had been agreed upon, that M. de Lally, remaining under the guard of the prison, should get into his coach at night, with the Confessor, accompanied by an officer in a tradesman's dress, and his valet de chambre; and that the executioner should only attend at the scaffold to do his business. M. Pasquier had opposed, with all his power, this mitigation; he had

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objected, that, in such cases, death was nothing; that it is the infamous apparatus attending it, which constitutes all the horror of it, such as the irons, the sledge, and the executioner. He gave this opinion again, upon the occasion of Count Lally's design to escape the execution of his sentence. A courier was dispatched to Choisy, and the answer returned was, that the Judges were to do as they pleased. The executioner, therefore, took possession of his prey, bound his hands, and, under pretence that the Negroes had the dexterity to strangle themselves with their tongues, and that M. de Lally might possibly have learnt this art in his travels, he proposed putting a gag into his mouth, to prevent it; the Recorder eagerly adopted this proposal, more especially as it would spare him from hearing a great deal of abuse, which the enraged Count would then, in vain, attempt to utter.

It was with this apparatus, and upon the carriage used for the vilest wretches, that M. de Lally was conducted to the gallows, through an immense crowd, not only of the mob and of trades-people, but also of all the military men, and all the Court. At the foot of the scaffold his gag was taken out. Many persons expected to hear him make an harangue: he resumed his firmness, ascended the scaffold quietly, and received the fatal stroke without saying a word.

The public, always troublesome, and always dissatisfied—by whom, however right one may act, one must expect to be criticized—so greedy of executions, and so open to blind commiseration—who had found the sentence of the Canadians too mild—soon found that of Count Lally too severe. This was, because
they

they only read in the decree these words; *for the cases resulting from the trial*: a vague declaration, which Courts of Justice pretend to have a right to use, and which may cover a great many blunders, abuses, injustices, and enormities; a form which ought not to be admitted on the part of a terrible tribunal, the least acts of which ought to be determined solely by the law, and under cover of which it may exert itself equally against innocence as against guilt. However this may be, at the very instant of Count Lally's execution, there was an avenger of his memory rising up in our colleges. His natural son, since known by the name of Count Tollendal, resolved from that time to justify his father; and has not passed a moment since without being engaged in this pursuit. Endowed with every talent of nature and art, instead of attending to the frivolous amusements of his youth, he has applied himself to the study of the several criminal codes of Europe; he has not been satisfied with these immense preparations, he has gained access even to the throne; and the late King, who had been inexorable to the father, had suffered himself to be moved by the son, and, beside the pecuniary benefits he had bestowed upon him, had furnished him with the means of pleading his cause with advantage before the Council, by supplying him with some secret papers, which he could not have got otherwise. With these assistances, and a still stronger protection he has met with from the reigning Monarch, and especially from his august consort, he has succeeded in causing the decree of Parliament to be cancelled; and it has been referred to the Parliament of Rouen, to examine fully into the affair.



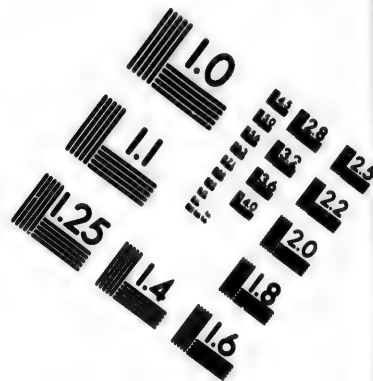
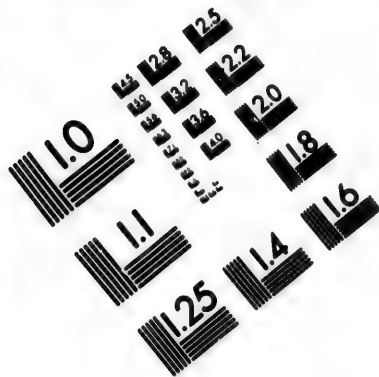
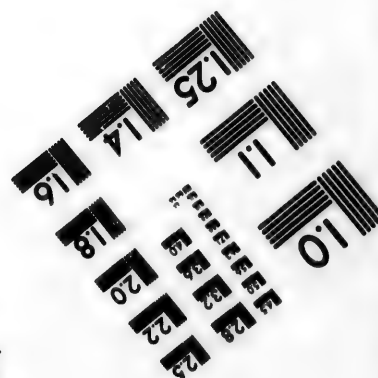
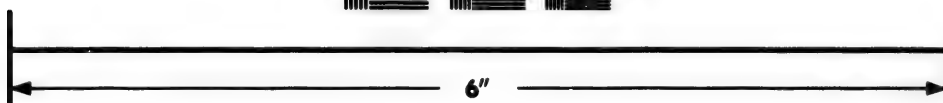
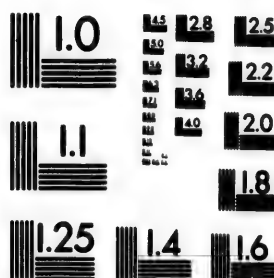


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1768. We know not what will be the decision of that Court; whose decree, like so many others, may possibly be the result of unremitted importunity, and of the signal favour which Count Tollendal enjoys. But, after having exposed every thing that has been said against the Recorder and the Judges, our impartiality obliges us to acknowledge, it is highly improbable, that a man of such rank, unanimously condemned by forty magistrates*, should not have been guilty;—that the culprit persisting in objecting to all the witnesses as rogues, or persons interested in finding him guilty, M. Pasquier had offered him to procure evidence on his part, whether people of the kingdom or foreigners; that he had assured him Government would send for them from any part, wherever they might be, but that M. de Lally had constantly refused giving in any list, under pretence that he did not know any, and that he had seen in India none but rogues or villains fit for the rack;—that, far from M. de Lally being assassinated without his being hear'd, he had undergone an interrogatory at different times, which, though it should not last longer than thirty hours, had taken up one hundred and fifteen, during which time he had leisure sufficient to draw up his answers, inasmuch as there was one of these answers which had lasted three hours;—

* One of them only, M. Mayneaud, was of a different opinion, but more severe. He said, that from M. Pasquier's report, he saw clearly, that Count Lally, during the thirty-two months he had passed in India, had exercised his authority with no other view but to bring sufferings upon all those who were under his command or protection; that he was accordingly inclined for a punishment that should last as long; but as there was none, he gave his opinion for that which would last the longest, which was breaking upon the wheel.

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In a word, that the record, taken in three different points of view, had, at first, been simply that of an historian relating facts;—that afterwards, resuming these facts, M. Pasquier had connected the depositions relative to them;—and that, taking them up again for a third time, he had composed the whole report, from which either the conviction or the exculpation of the culprit was to ensue;—that, during the numerous sittings which this report had taken up, it had been done so clearly, that M. Pasquier had not been once interrupted;—that his conclusion had been, that supposing M. de Lally to be a man of understanding, as he had always been reckoned by those who had known him, his conduct was perfectly evident;—he was undoubtedly convicted, from the moment he had set out, till the surrender of Pondicherry, of having formed and executed his plan of satiating his ambition, his avarice, and his spirit of revenge, at any rate whatsoever, even by betraying the interests of the King, the State, and the Company:—that otherwise he ought to be considered as the greatest idiot among mankind, but yet black, wicked, atrocious, and guilty of an infinite number of particular enormities, the least of which would still deserve the notice of justice.

The only plausible objection that presents itself at first sight, is, that a trial of this nature belonged to a Court Martial. In the first place, the blame of this must be laid upon Government, since the Parliament only tried Count Lally by commission. But would there be, in reality, any good foundation for this report? The most that can be said, is, that it would have been proper to collect a kind of mixed tribunal,

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tribunal, because the heads of accusation, while they presented some offences which seemed to be military, presented still more that were of the competency of ordinary Judges; and because M. de Lally was invested with the three powers collectively in India, by being at the head of the army, of justice, and of finance. In a word, let us consider what the sentence says. It declares him duly attainted and convicted of having betrayed the interests of the King, of his situation, and of the India-Company—of abuse of authority—of vexations and exactions towards the subjects of the King, and foreigners, inhabitants of Pondicherry. It must be acknowledged, that the Magistrates have, at least, taken the precaution to present the sentence under an aspect, which seems to shew that they have not exceeded the limits of their jurisdiction. But the person who has most severely judged M. de Lally, if we may be allowed to say so, is he who has first ventured to defend him, both in public, and in his writings; it is M. de Voltaire, whose *bon mot* is quoted upon this occasion with so much satisfaction: *He is a man, said he, upon whom every man had a right to lay his hands, except the executioner.* A *bon mot* more specious than solid. In fact, does it mean that M. de Lally was guilty of all enormities, except those crimes that are punished by the law? This would only be a satire upon our legislation, too exaggerated and too ridiculous to deserve any credit, or to make any impression. We must therefore confine ourselves to the true and natural meaning; and, as in France, and in every polished State, no one can do justice to himself, it is therefore our last decision, that Count Lally

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should have lost his life under the hands of the executioner, and of the executioner alone.

While this trial, and that of the Canadians, were topics of conversation—which perpetuated too long the memory of a disastrous war—the Duke de Choiseul was endeavouring to efface it by the advantages of peace. Without having the title of Prime Minister, he exercised, as Cardinal Fleuri had done, all the authority of it, since he had the sole management of the three most important departments; for we have observed that the Duke de Praslin* was no more, if we may be allowed the expression, than a puppet in politics, whom his cousin placed, put in motion, and removed at pleasure. Till the period of Madame de Pompadour's death, the Duke de Choiseul had only governed the King secondarily; but then he ruled over him entirely. His first attention had been to gain the confidence of his Sovereign, by delivering his Majesty from every apprehension of an approaching rupture, which the murmurs of the dissatisfied English nation might occasion. This was the circumstance which Lewis XV. most dreaded, who, tired to excess with the war, would have sacrificed half of his kingdom to hear no more of it. In order to compass this, and to quiet the Monarch more effectually, the Minister employed all the resources of his genius, turned to intrigue, or rather to low cunning. Whenever he found out a man fit for his purpose, he gave him a rank, and sent him, either to London, or to America.

* Count Choiseul, had been created Duke de Praslin by the King, on the 1st of November, 1762. He was admitted into the Parliament, as Duke and Peer, on the 20th December following.

OR

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or to the English settlements in the East Indies. These fabricators of deceit, directed by his impulse, fomented, on one hand, the divisions excited by Wilkes, and on the other, the disputes between the colonies and the mother-country; in a word, they contrived to raise up in Asia, against the rivals of France, a formidable enemy in the person of Heyder-Ally-Kaun. At the same time the Duke was employed in strengthening the union of the Family-Compact between Spain and the several branches of the House of Bourbon. He consoled his Catholic Majesty with the hopes of a revenge, which would be the more certain, as it was more slow and better combined. Accordingly, he kept upon good terms with the Count of Aranda, that celebrated President of the Council of Castille, the Choiseul of Madrid; he urged him to enlighten his nation, to break the yoke of superstition and fanaticism, to expel the Jesuits, to abolish the execrable tribunal of the Inquisition, to restore the navy, to make commerce flourish, by freeing it from its shackles, and to soften and polish the manners of the Spaniards by arts and literature.

He did not, at the same time, lose sight of another alliance, more recent, but more difficult to preserve, that of the House of Austria. His attachment to that august House, and the confidence they reposed in him, removed many obstacles which were continually rising. The prospect, though distant, of an Arch-Duchess seated upon the throne of France, was the charm he employed to induce the Cabinet of Vienna to give a new turn to their politics. With the apprehensions of this union, he confined

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fined the activity of the King of Prussia, that ally so useful to England, by his powerful diversions. He did not flatter himself that he should be able to dissolve the friendship established between the Courts of London and Petersburg: but he endeavoured to make it useless, by employing the Empress in quieting the kingdom of Poland, the troubles of which he secretly encouraged; and keeping up her apprehensions of a war with Turkey, which was also the result of the artful insinuations he ordered to be suggested to the Divan, by the Ambassador of France. The Czarina was not the dupe of his intrigues, nor even of a formal and gracious concession, which she had much at heart, according to which, having made a declaration, in form of a reversal, that the Imperial title should not make any alteration in the ceremonial used between the Courts of France and Russia, the King granted publicly to that Princess the Imperial title, and acknowledged it in her as attached to her throne. She had a natural antipathy against this Minister, and detested him still more, since she had learnt, that he had caused one of his emissaries*, with which he overran all foreign Courts, to draw up a circumstantial account of the revolution which had placed her upon the Imperial throne—an account, the publication of which she dreaded. As for the rest, as it was impossible intirely to destroy a plot so well formed, she contented herself with casting a ridicule upon the vast pretensions of this turbulent negotiator, by calling him, *The Prompter of Mustafa, the Coachman of Europe.*

* M. de Rulhières.

While

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While he thus secured the tranquillity of France abroad, by the troubles he excited in other kingdoms, the Duke de Choiseul was endeavouring to indemnify her for her losses, and to improve her acquisitions, or to gain others; he also was engaged in putting the interior part of the kingdom in a state to recommence the war with greater advantage, when circumstances should either require or admit of it. He displayed upon this point a spirit of system little calculated to make his project succeed, but very useful in forming creatures to himself. After having executed, in this military department, the first reformation which is indispensably necessary at peace—as much, not to alarm the neighbouring powers, by armies more numerous than are required in times of tranquillity, as to fulfil the object of œconomy in the expences, which it was impossible to support upon the same footing—he gave out his grand ordonnance, which has been so much censured, and which was, as it were, the signal of all the confusions since occasioned among the troops.

25 Nov.
1762.

20 Dec.
1762.

By this ordonnance, the King reduced his infantry to nineteen regiments of four battalions; twenty-two of two battalions, and six of one battalion. He ordered that all the regiments in future should bear the name of some of the provinces; in order the better to preserve the memory of their actions. He reserved to himself, in future, the appointment of the Lieutenant Colonels and Majors; created a military chest and a paymaster to each regiment; fixed the engagement of the soldiers to eight years instead of six; and granted half a year's pay and a suit of cloaths to those who should not retire till they had served

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served the time of two engagements; and a whole year's pay to those who should have served three, with permission to carry it away with them to their own homes, or to be admitted among the invalids. He increased the appointments of the officers, especially in time of war; took upon himself the recruiting and the accoutrements, which the Captains were formerly obliged to furnish; and, in a word, ordered that all the regiments of French infantry should be clothed in white, except that of the Lorraine guards.

The spirit of this ordonnance was, to have old soldiers and young officers. The former, as being more supple to discipline; the latter, as being more zealous to maintain it. But the inconvenience attending it was, on the one hand, to increase the desertions, and to burthen the State with an expence which it could not support; and on the other, to extinguish emulation, to discourage the old officers, and to open the door to favour, already of so great influence under the French Government. With respect to the recruits, the new mode prevented many abuses and rogueries; it maintained the complete establishment, as much as was thought necessary, but it encouraged the negligence of the Captains, and brought enormous expences upon the King.

This ordonnance was followed by others, the most important of which were those that reduced the cavalry to thirty regiments, exclusive of the Carabineers, the dragoons to eleven, and the light troops to four legions: namely, the Royal Legion, the Legions of Flanders, Hainault, and Conflans; besides the regiments of volunteers of Clermont and Soubise. These two last corps were since crected into legions.

17 March
1766.

The

1768.

21 Dec.
1768.

The corps of Grenadiers of France, composed of the companies of reformed grenadiers, far from experiencing any diminution, received additional lustre, because it was commanded by Count Stainville, brother to the Minister. It was established upon the footing of four brigades, each brigade consisting of twelve companies, each raised from forty-five to fifty-two men.

8 Nov.
1761.20 Jan.
1762.

As it was particularly against the English that France seemed to be obliged to prepare herself to fight in future, that is to say for wars beyond sea, the Duke of Choiseul had been sensible of the necessity of accustoming the troops to these transmigrations. Accordingly, in suppressing the hundred free companies of marines, he had incorporated them with the regiments destined to serve equally upon land and in the colonies, and he since increased the number of them in the same view. His department of the navy was that which he chiefly attended to. To extinguish, if possible, the generation of officers of this corps, who had conducted themselves so ill in the last war, he had made a considerable reform among them, which was an unprecedented step, and struck them with terror. He kept the best and youngest officers, or those who gave the greatest hopes, and promoted them. In order to destroy the mercantile spirit, which had so long been rooted among them, he increased their appointments, in hopes of enabling them to support themselves in a proper manner, without being diverted from the service by views of interest; and although the civil department of the navy was the most necessary in time of peace, and especially at this period, when the Council were endeavouring to give new vigour

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to the labours of the ports, he published, a few days after, a similar reform in this department; in order to increase, from the produce of this saving, the appointments of the military branch.

We have seen how the Duke de Choiseul, by exciting the zeal of different corporations, and even of rich individuals, had received subscriptions, which, when turned to account, were to form a powerful navy. He had very recently obtained a million * from the Clergy for the same purpose. The only business remaining was to supply the departments with materials proper for building the ships. There is a great quantity of wood of this kind in France, but which could not then be made use of, because there was no method contrived for removing it. Among this number were the forests of the valley of Gaspé in Bearn; which abound in stately trees of the finest growth; the Minister caused them to be cut down, and made the river Gaspé navigable throughout the course of four-and-twenty leagues, which was necessary for conveying them. The first convoy of masts arrived at Bayonne upon this river, conducted by M. d'Estigny, Intendant of the province, under whose direction, all the obstacles that had hitherto been thought invincible, were surmounted. This convoy was received into the city with the firing of the guns, and the acclamations of the people: it was a real triumph for the Commissioner, who had been intrusted with this business, and who was one of the most able that has appeared under the reign of Lewis XV., truly a man of genius and understanding.

By supplying the ports anew with ships, and by

* Between forty-one and forty-two thousand pounds.

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filling the magazines with rigging, with every kind of tackle, and with naval stores, the Duke de Choiseul was very sensible that he should work only for the benefit of the enemies of France, unless he new moulded the constitution of the navy; a constitution radically defective, the principle of all the repeated and continual defeats in this branch during the last war, and which had compelled us to sue for peace, and to accept it upon the most humiliating terms. This object had employed the Duke's thoughts; he had reflected and consulted upon it; and he had perceived that the only remedy was the total suppression of the military branch of the navy, and it's re-establishment upon a different footing. He was already at work upon this; he thought of opening the door to merit, and of composing this corps indiscriminately from all the seamen who had acquired any reputation in the last war; which would have made it abound more with officers of the India Company, of privateers, and even of merchantmen, than with officers preserved from the Royal navy. He did not think it necessary to make a secret of an operation so advantageous to the State, and so glorious to the Monarch; but he was mistaking; he was soon attacked by all the higher Nobility, alarmed at the opprobrium which was going to be cast upon them, by the degradation of so many individuals belonging to their body; whereas the point of honour, properly understood, ought to have induced them to solicit the dismissal of officers unworthy of belonging to them. The whole Court was in agitation, and this Minister, who was all-powerful in doing mischief, was not sufficiently so to succeed in doing good. He grew angry, and abandoned a department in which he had experienced

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riencced nothing but disgust and chagrin; he resigned to the Duke de Praslin, and resumed the management of foreign affairs.

The bad success which had attended the designs of this Minister for the reinstatement of the antient colonies, and the establishment of new ones, did not a little contribute to make him take this resolution. The land forces had been much displeased with their continual transmigration into fatal climates, where they perished in numbers. The inhabitants detested the Governors that had been given to them, who, according to the new system, being also taken from the land officers, understood nothing of the administration they were intrusted with, and brought into it nothing more than a despotism, disgusting every where, but particularly in those countries, still retaining the same fondness for liberty which had distinguished the first inhabitants, and not yet fashioned to the slavery of the people of Europe. M. d'Ennery, at Martinico, M. de Nolivos, at Guadaloupe, and Count d'Estaing, at St. Domingo, were so many petty tyrants, who made some regret the dominion of the English, the mildness of which they had experienced, and made others wish for it. The last of these officers especially, though possessed of great talents, by the injustice of his demands, the singularity of his projects, and his severity in executing them, excited the greatest ferment in the island, and was at the eve of producing a revolt*.

The Duke de Choiseul had not been more fortunate in creating the new settlements, with which he pretended to replace those that France had lost, or

* Upon the occasion of re-establishing the militia, which he had attempted, he had caused the code *Théodat* to be printed; a curious piece of his composition.

1768. rather, he wanted the depth of understanding necessary for the execution of such enterprizes. We cannot deny that he had talents, but they were not those of a founder. His ardent and active genius was too contrary to the slow and deliberate combinations, and to the patience necessary for such a character. Of a bold and enterprizing spirit to overcome obstacles, he was easily discouraged, if the resistance was carried on too long. Thus it was, that, instead of suffering St. Lucia to people itself gradually by emigrations from Martinico, which was overrun with inhabitants, he wanted to establish plantations there all at once: he sent over at a great expence, and with more parade than was necessary, seven or eight hundred men, whose fatal destiny rather excited pity than surprize in the minds of skilful speculators. Every thing soon perished in this uncultivated and unwholesome spot, where no care had been taken to introduce the modern colony with proper precautions. The sending of a Governor and an Intendant had not been omitted, the two most useless persons, and oftentimes the two most fatal scourges of rising colonies. After a short experiment, no less costly in money than men, the project was obliged to be given up. The Chiefs were recalled when there was no longer any society to govern, and the government, as well as the intendance of St. Lucia, was reunited to that of Martinico.

The foundation of Guiana, decorated with the superb name of *Equinoctial France*, which was undertaken at the same time, was an enterprize still more extravagant and disastrous. The design was, by engaging the nation to forget their calamities, to make them lose sight of the faults which had brought them on; and for this purpose they were plunged into

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into fresh misfortunes by other faults. The island of Cayenne, which had been inhabited for a century past, was constantly in a state of misery and infancy, from which it ought singly to have been raised; when the Duke de Choiseul, more intent upon the glory than the good of the kingdom, adopted, upon this occasion, the plan of a set of ambitious men, who were misled by their presumption, and suffered himself to be seduced by his magnificence. It was represented to him, that by establishing, in the vast continent of Guiana, a national and free population—which would in future be capable itself of opposing foreign attacks, and of hastening to the assistance of the sugar-colonies, whenever circumstances should require it—he would lay the foundations of population and vigour, calculated to repair the loss of Canada. It was therefore, if we may be allowed the expression, a chapel of ease he was contriving for the mother-country, a nursery of men, and not a mine of wealth. The views were good, but the time, the circumstances, and the situation ill-chosen. The measures taken were still more injudicious: a few families from Alsace were sent for at a great expence, some of which were almost starved in France before they embarked; a dreadful prognostic of the destiny which awaited them. Twelve hundred men, after a long voyage, were landed at once in a desert country, which was impracticable in the rainy season. The Government was to lodge and subsist them in the beginning. A miserable shed was the only asylum they were furnished with, and the provisions spoiled by the heat, the damp, and the transportation, occasioned an epidemic disease and mortality. The inundations completed the destruction of those whom illness had spared.

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The Chevalier Turgot, author of the project, appointed Governor of Guiana, with a salary of one hundred thousand livres *, which he had peaceably enjoyed during eighteen months, was at length obliged to depart, to remedy such a number of evils. Upon the general complaints which the colonists brought against M. de Chanvallon, the Intendant, he thought himself obliged to secure his person; he caused him to be arrested, and sent him to France bound hand and foot. After this expedition, he returned to give an account of the colony; that is to say, to confirm what was already publicly reported, that there was no longer any colony existing. The result of this was a dispute between the two Chiefs, reciprocally accusing each other. This was a third trial in Administration, the decision of which was expected with impatience. But the Government, to avoid its being criticised, and observing, besides the bad issue of the two former trials, had taken the resolution to reserve the cognizance of this to itself: accordingly, the matter has been discussed in the closets of the Ministers, and there never has been any decision, or at least a legal one. The Chevalier Turgot, and M. de Chanvallon, have been alternately disgraced; the latter was, however, condemned to perpetual imprisonment, but without any atonement for the blood spilt in these distant regions, which calls out in vain for revenge.

The public censures, which it was meant to avoid, have not less taken place, and with greater acrimony. The Parliament has also taken a part in

* Above four thousand pounds.

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this cause, and given out a decree, in default of appearance, against M. Chardon, Master of Requests, and Recorder of the trial to the Council. An affair of importance resulted from this with the Court, which, from the number of incidents, has been lost among the rest, and has been protracted to the change in the Ministry. M. de Chanvallon has been since set at liberty, and found innocent, in as mysterious a manner as he had been tried, and with the singular prohibition of publishing his sentence. M. de Chardon alone has remained attainted, and has laughed at it. This has not prevented him from being afterwards appointed Intendant of Corsica, and to different posts for which he was adapted.

One anecdote, too curious to be omitted, and which happened upon occasion of the catastrophe of Guiana, gives us a better sketch of the Duke de Choiseul, and of the nature of his project, than any thing we could say. The author of the *Année Littéraire* having inserted in his production a letter, which had been addressed to him upon the subject of an act of benevolence exercised towards a whole family of foreigners, at the eve of perishing upon the road, in going to embark at Rochefort for this devoted country, the Minister heard the adventure spoken of at his table; upon this he exclaimed, *that scoundrel Fréron, does he attempt to speak of Guiana? let me see the number.* The affecting article was read to him, which, although it did not in the least bear the marks of detraction, yet the Minister declared: *He shall lie this night at Fort l'Evêque*; which was accordingly executed. It is true, that the Minister was soon brought back to

1768. more generous sentiments. The author of the journal wrote to him, complaining of the treatment he received, and was set at liberty. Thus it is that the Duke de Choiseul, having a light understanding and a good heart, committed and repaired an injustice with equal facility.

The measures taken for re-establishing the commerce of the India Company, seemed at first more satisfactory to the proprietors, and made them expect for a few years a happy and brilliant destiny; but this renewal had in itself a radical fault, a principle of destruction, the effects of which would manifest themselves sooner or later. However this may be, the Company having ventured to declare to the Government, that it was to them their misfortunes and errors were to be imputed—since they had only conducted their affairs, during the war, under the influence of Administration, or rather, to speak properly, since they had in reality taken no concern in them—the Government, apparently affected by their reproaches, authorized them to deliberate upon their situation, and all of them agreed to submit to the decisions of a merchant; who, taking hasty strides towards fortune, was devoured by a secret ambition, which was not then suspected. He proposed a plan, so clear, so prudent, and so useful, that he reconciled all parties. M. Necker, for that was his name, was looked upon as the restorer of the Company. In the first definitive Assembly, Port l'Orient, the coasts of Africa, with the islands of France and Bourbon, were ceded again to the King. His Majesty, on his part, gave up the twelve thousand shares and the loans which he was possessed of, and left to the voters the privilege

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vilege of making their arrangements, and of adopting, at pleasure, the most proper measures for the re-establishment of commerce, without the interference of any royal Commissioners. Accordingly, in this first moment of liberty, Syndics and Directors were appointed, who were only to be assistants and co-operators with the hero of the day, in the system of administration which he had proposed. He knew how enthusiasm was produced, and he had carried his boldness so far, as to fix the period in which the shares were to begin to receive a dividend. Every man already previously enjoyed in prospect this epocha of prosperity; and thus the Company, scarce disengaged from the shackles of Government, blindly resigned itself to the discretion of an individual.

This restoration, though executed before the Duke de Choiseul quitted the naval department, did not directly concern him, since the India Company was in the department of the Comptroller General: but as this officer was in some measure only his first Clerk, the restoration ought to be considered as his work, more especially as, since that time, by the cessions made again to the King, the authority was mixt, and as the Duke, who was inclined to claim what did not belong to him, was much disposed to take the whole merit of this business to himself, if his influence could have been in the least prevalent.

Other projects still occupied the thoughts of the Minister; he wished to immortalize his name by building a city. There was a heath belonging to France, which overlooked the lake of Geneva.

This

1768. This spot is called Verfoi, and it is only at a small distance from the territory and the city which rules over the lake. This Republic, tormented with intestine commotions, had raised general dissatisfaction. The Minister imagined, that the best method of punishing this city, would be to raise a rival to it, by constructing a port on this spot, which was to be turned into a city, and upon which flattery soon bestowed the name of *Choiseul la ville*: his design was to make this port free, as well as the city, and to admit and to receive into it, as citizens, all foreigners of whatever religion, with the privilege of exercising it there unmolested. This was the method of supplying it soon with inhabitants, and of rendering it flourishing; considering it's position, which enabled it to carry on the greatest trade, to partake, and perhaps to secure to itself, that of it's neighbours. The works were begun and carried on with vigour: and M. de Voltaire had already celebrated them, when the disgrace of the Minister interrupted this plan, and threw it into oblivion.

21 June. Shall we reckon among the acquisitions gained to France by the Duke de Choiseul, the city of Avignon, and the county of Venaissin, which were seized without any act of hostility? If the matter had indeed depended upon the Minister alone, it is probable, that this beautiful country would never have returned under the dominion of the Sovereign Pontiff; but he was too well acquainted with the pusillanimity of his master, to flatter himself that he should determine him irrevocably to maintain this act of vigour he had been induced to exert.

Lewis

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Lewis XIV. more absolute than his great grandson, had executed this manœuvre three times, and as often restored the same States. Philosophy, indeed, had not then enlightened the minds of Princes so much as it has done since. But Lewis XV. was, however, nothing of a philosopher. He had engaged in this aggression against the Pope, for the honour of the House of Bourbon, insulted, in the person of the Duke of Parma, by the anathemas of his Holiness. It was therefore rather a simple chastisement he meant to employ, than to make an absolute separation, which was too repugnant to his disposition. We may judge of this by the respectful manner in which the invasion was executed—by the ambiguity even of the letters patent, in which it was not ventured to hint at the real complaint against the Sovereign Pontiff, and in which mention was only made of a reunion effected by virtue of the unalienability of the domains of the Crown, —in a word, by the record entered in the Parliament of Provence, which, according to the suggestions of the Court, ordered only, that the arms of our Holy Father the Pope should be taken down, with *respect and decency*, from the places where they were fixed up, and those of the King put in their place. Accordingly, we presented ourselves before Avignon, with two battalions of infantry, two squadrons of dragoons, some canon and mortars.

The Vice-Legat appeared greater than the French General upon this occasion. He told M. de Rochecouart, who signified the intentions of his Majesty to him, that he had orders from his Holiness not to make the least resistance, but at the same time to declare to him, *that such a conduct placed those who*
pursued

1768. *pursued it in the case of the ecclesiastical punishments stated by the Bull in Cœna Domini.* The Duke de Choiseul's intention—who had the total extirpation of the Jesuits from Christendom at heart, and who imagined that he saw the interference of that sect in this quarrel *—was at least determined, not to return to Rezzonico this portion of his dominions, not only 'till after he had given satisfaction to the Infant of Parma, but also, till he had annihilated that Order, which he pursued with such implacable vengeance. The Pope had the courage to refuse his compliance, and died without having fulfilled either of these points, which were obtained only under his successor Ganganelli.

The first reports spread of the intended invasion of Avignon, brought to the knowledge of the public a wager of a singular kind. The Marquis de Poyanne, at the time of the treaty of peace in 1763, had given to M. de Brancas the sum of 18,000 livres †, of which the latter was to return 12 livres ‡ per day, till the first act of hostility between France and any other Power, in which case M. de Brancas was to keep the rest of the wager, with a proviso, nevertheless, that he should continue the payment upon the same footing as long as the peace lasted. The question was, whether this invasion was an act of hostility, as there was neither

* We refer to the Appendix for a manuscript letter from Rome, which was circulated at the time, and seems to treat the matter thoroughly, though the author has been found mistaking in his politics.

† Seven hundred and fifty pounds.

‡ Ten shillings.

resistance nor defence—that not a single gun was fired—and that the Ministers respectively remained in the Courts where they resided. It is not known how the question was determined, which however was soon settled by the Corsican war. 1768.

The island of Corsica had been forty years in insurrection against the Republic of Genoa: which persisted in assuming the title of Lord Paramount over it; and after having incurred enormous expences, and exhausted it's strength to no purpose, had been obliged to have recourse to France; which, instead of sending subsidies, had taken upon herself to defray the expences of the Sovereignty, and to contain with her troops the pretended rebels of this kingdom. But these assistances failing at the time of the peace, and the Genoese being still unable to subdue by their arms, or to bring back by gentle means, a people whom their cruelties had alienated from them, the Corsicans, as soon as the French should have retired, were upon the eve of enjoying that liberty which they claimed as their original right; and which, even under the Romans, those conquerors of the earth, they had never been deprived of, except by force and for a time. Unfortunately for them, there was a Choiseul in the Ministry of Versailles. He gave the Council to understand, that it would be an easy matter to obtain from the Republic of Genoa the cession of this island, which was only a burthen to it, and which, in fact, it was obliged to abandon: he represented it as one of the best acquisitions that could be obtained, as a fertile and excellent colony, very well calculated to afford us a partial indemnity for others, and especially for Canada, since, exclusive of the furs, we might find there

1768. there every thing we used to bring from that country, especially wood for ship-building, and naval stores of different kinds^{*}; that it would not be difficult to preserve it, on account of it's proximity; that, in a word, this project would be attended with the double advantage of securing to ourselves a port for the protection of our trade in the Mediterranean, and of taking it from Great Britain, which, as he pretended, had the matter in contemplation. The political views of the Minister did not fail of applause: the King alone was alarmed at them, from the apprehension that they might excite the jealousy of the English. M. de Choiseul was too good a Courtier not to remove the King's fears upon this account, and to promise his Majesty, that the purchase and conquest of the island would be completed, without their shewing marks of dissatisfaction by any rupture. Undoubtedly, there were some members prudent enough to take also into consideration the expences which this expedition must necessarily occasion; but either no great attention was paid to them, or they deceived themselves with respect to the sum they might amount to; and it was resolved to complete the acquisition. One circumstance was not examined into, which, however, it would have been very proper to do; this was, whether the rights of the Republic of Genoa over Corsica were really well founded; whether the uninterrupted claims of a whole people, who, for half a century past, had

^{*} All these advantages are discussed in a *letter from a Philosopher travelling in Corsica*, a manuscript which our readers will see with pleasure, Appendix, N^o II.

shaken off it's tyrannic yoke, were not infinitely more legitimate; in a word, whether, admitting the justice of these pretended rights, it were allowable for that State to transfer it's sovereignty to France, without the express, or at least the tacit consent of the nation. 1768.

Without arguing these great diplomatic questions, reserved for the discussion of idle speculators, and which are at most only fit for vain treatises upon the rights of nature and nations, the Ministry of Versailles exercised the only law of Sovereigns, the law of the strongest. The Marquis de Chauvelin, appointed General of the King's forces, at his arrival, without any previous ceremony, produced an edict from his master, in which his Majesty announced himself as King of Corsica, and by a particular ordonnance declared every one a rebel who should not submit, and should attempt, according to the principle of natural right, to repel force by force. In a word, it was enjoined, that the Corsican ships should hoist the French flag, otherwise they were to be declared pirates, and all other Powers were invited to fall upon them. Some of the first acts of hostility being attended with success, puffed up the vanity of the Duke de Choiseul, who caused them to be published in the Gazette of France, with childish parade and indecent expressions. He had occasion to repent of this; and the account of the disgraces which the French troops soon experienced, was quickly returned by the foreign Gazettes, with marks of satisfaction, which convinced him with how much indignation all Europe beheld this invasion.

A moderate,

27 Aug.

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28 Aug.

A moderate, but firm manifesto, published in the name of the General and of the Supreme Council of State of the kingdom of Corsica, contributed not a little to increase it. This proud people complained in it, that his most Christian Majesty, after having expressly declared them to be free and independent, and after having treated, upon this footing, of an accommodation between their nation and the Republic of Genoa, during four years consecutively, spoke of substituting himself to pretended rights, the insufficiency of which he had acknowledged. The manifesto further set forth, that even admitting the sovereignty of Genoa, it could not have been established but by a proper contract between the two parties; which was necessarily dissolved when infringed by one of the parties, by a cession made, not only without the consent of the other, but to which it had not even been called upon to accede; for it was previously necessary to inquire, whether the motives which might have influenced the voluntary resolutions of Corsica to enter into a contract with Genoa, were the same with respect to France. The consideration which the nation had always had for the French troops, was likewise urged, as being far from furnishing them with a pretence for treating the Corsicans as enemies; the perfidy of the Duke de Choiseul was complained of, who, after having written to assure them that their situation was not changed, and that the negotiations relative to a pacification with the Republic of Genoa might be renewed, suffered that the troops introduced under this pretence should exercise real acts of hostility, should endeavour to invade

invade the kingdom, and to treat the Corsicans as a conquered nation, *as a flock of sheep sold at the market.*

This manifesto was supported by so vigorous a defence, that the end of the campaign turned entirely to the honour of the Corsicans. They had Paoli at their head, at once a Man of Letters, a Legislator, a Politician, and a General; at least, such was the character he bore at that time. He was perfectly sensible, that he was not in a condition to oppose singly the efforts of France; but his object was to gain time, by carrying on a war of chicanery, to undermine the enemy's army by the intemperance of the climate, by the unwholesomeness of the spot, and by diseases: he flattered himself that he should have some support from England, and did, in fact, receive succours from thence, through the means of some individuals going to Corsica, and he expected more effectual exertions.

In the mean while, the murmurs were very considerable in France: an infinite number of men had been lost; the expences amounted already to the thirtieth million, and all the letters received from the spot, far from bringing any comfort, contained nothing but lamentations. So dreadful a description was even given of it, that, supposing the complete surrender of the island, it was expected to find it deserted and uncultivated; and that it would be necessary to create every thing anew, and to sacrifice two hundred millions*, before any advantage could be reaped from it. The Duke de Choiseul, who was easily dazzled with the first brilliant speculations that presented themselves to his imagi-

* Upwards of eight millions sterling.

1768. nation, had not the obstinacy of a man of confined talents, and was as easily brought back to more prudent considerations, discovered the folly of his project. He would, perhaps, have given it up, if the favour he enjoyed, and especially his honour, had not depended upon the success of it. The King grew out of temper; the Marquis de Chauvelin, his favourite, exasperated at being obliged to fly from a handful of mountaineers, was incessantly complaining, that he had been sent with too few troops; he earnestly asked for more, and, in order that his conduct might less be called in question, he exaggerated the difficulties, expences, and little advantage to be gained from this conquest; he was particularly in extreme apprehensions lest the English should fall upon him, and then all would have been lost. The Duke de Choiseul saw that there was no possibility of retracting; he intimidated, seduced, or lulled the Court of London, in such a manner that it did not interfere; he resolved to fill Corsica with troops, and sent to the number of forty-eight battalions there; he caused to be substituted to the Marquis de Chauvelin, Count Vaux, a rigid and even a hard General, who spoke of nothing but gallows and executioners, and flattered him with the bâton of Marshal of France, if he scoured Corsica with dispatch. This General fulfilled his commission too ably, without doubt; for, having nothing to do but to present himself every where, in less than two months time he became master of the whole island; and this rapidity of conquests, by which he flattered himself to arrive at the promised dignity, served as a pretence not to promote him to it: he had done nothing of so great difficulty as to merit such a reward, by putting him over
the

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the head of so many old officers not less deserving.

In fact, it was discouragement alone that had done all the business. The principal Chiefs, not finding in England the resources they expected, and the prospect of which had assisted them in keeping up the hope and courage of their countrymen, considered the resistance as unavailing as it was perilous. They took refuge in the neighbouring States; and Paoli, who went to London, lost there his vain titles—his glory, equally frivolous—and his talents, which became doubtful.

The success of the invasion of Corsica retarded for eighteen months the fall of the Duke de Choiseul. It was become inevitable, by a change produced in the interior of the Court; a change which the Minister might have prevented, and the fatal consequences of which he had neither feared nor sufficiently foreseen. Before we enter into a detail of this singular anecdote, by resuming the private life of the Monarch, let us continue the description of the state of the Finances, of Justice, and of Religion, the only branches of administration we have to go through.

We have seen in what manner M. de Laverdy was become Comptroller General. This choice, made from the class of the Magistracy, and from among the members of the Parliament that were the most austere, produced a moment of enthusiasm. People flattered themselves, that it was seriously thought of to re-establish order in the finances: nothing but retrenchments and oeconomy were spoken of. The Marchioness of Pompadour, contributing herself to maintain the high opinion of this sage at Court, affected to send him a paper box,

1768. box, in which was the picture of Sully. In a note written by herself she gallantly told him, that, thinking he had too much modesty to get his own picture drawn, she sent him his true likeness; and at the bottom of the box were the following four lines:

De l'habile et sage Sully
Il ne nous reste que l'image:
Aujourd'hui ce grand personnage
Va revivre dans Laverdy*.

The first operations of the Minister were truly patriotic. A few days after his promotion, the Parliament registered a declaration, permitting to carry on the trade and transportation of corn of every kind, from one province to another, without paying any duties; and, a few months after, they published an edict upon the same matter, by which the corn trade was declared entirely free, without the necessity of a permit to introduce the corn into the kingdom, or to send it out, at the charge only of a trifling duty for the importation; and forbidding the exportation from the ports and places situated on the frontier, only when the value of the corn should have risen in three consecutive markets to a certain fixed and alarming price. But it was still to the Duke de Choiseul that these happy innovations in the internal administration of the kingdom were owed; or rather, to a new sect of Philosophers, who began to acquire reputation, and the chief person

22 Dec.
1763.

19 July
1764.

* Of Sully, once so wise and great,
The image only we retain;
But now, that Minister of State
In Laverdy shall live again.

of whom being about the Marchioness, had acquired a great share of weight and influence. It is proper to introduce these Philosophers to our readers, on account of the important light they appeared in at that time. These alterations, then, sprang from the authors of the Encyclopædia; a word, which, according to it's definition, embraces the whole circle of human science; and is a system of universal knowledge. But, as one man cannot be equal to such a variety of objects, this set of Philosophers attached themselves chiefly to metaphysics and morality. One class among them, allured by a particular propensity, turned their speculations towards agrarian matters, and the part of Administration relative to them; in a word, to the internal œconomy of the kingdom: from whence they obtained the title of Œconomists. The person who was most versed in this science, was M. Quesnay, physician to Madame de Pompadour. Lewis XV. who was not a sufficient enthusiast to go in search of merit, had too much sense not to be attached to it, when it came immediately in his way. He was pleased with M. Quesnay; conversed freely with him; used to call him his *thinker*; and gave him for arms three flowers of *Pensée**. This physician initiated his Majesty in the mysteries of œconomic principles, or rather taught him the elements of them, which are very simple; for this science is only become complicated and abstruse from the pedantry of it's professors. The Marquis de Mirabeau, author of the book,

* *Pensée* signifies thought, from whence our name of Pansy as this flower, which is vulgarly called heart's-ease.

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intituled, *L'ami des Hommes* †, had not a little contributed to this, in publishing this work, which, though full of excellent views, is rendered obscure by the confusion of ideas, the barbarous affectation of coining new words, the singular turns, and especially by it's emphatic pedantry, which is particularly calculated to create disgust. His book, however, produced a quite contrary effect; it excited attention upon matters so important as agriculture and population; the thoughts of every one were turned to these branches of Administration, which, being well discussed by clearer writers, a happy revolution was effected in these particulars, that would have rendered France much more flourishing, if there had not been Ministers at the head of the kingdom, who were more attentive to turn this improvement to the benefit of the public treasure, than to the advantage and happiness of the subjects. The clearing of lands, the labours of the field, and rural œconomy, were now the only topics of conversation. All the sciences of speculation and of utility resulting from them, had their academies in France; they were studied there with care and attention; the branches of agriculture and commerce alone, which are of primary necessity and use, which are the most interesting of all to the support and the power of a great empire, were neglected. This neglect made us ashamed; and companies were formed, in the several provinces of the State, who were employed in carrying these sciences to the degree of perfection they are capable of, and

† *The friend of Mankind.*

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20 March,
1757.

in procuring to the kingdom those resources, which it can improve, on the one hand, by the fertility of its soil; and, on the other, by its fortunate position upon the Ocean and the Mediterranean. Britain first set the example: a society of agriculture, commerce, and the arts, was formed there, with the approbation of the King. This example was soon followed at Paris, and in other places.

The labours of the field began to be holden in some estimation; experiments were made; and great Noblemen did not think it unworthy of them to attend to these objects. The class of Peasants, hitherto so much despised, and so much oppressed, acquired a sort of consistency, and a greater share of consideration. They were encouraged; and we became sensible of the absurdity of suffering one province to be famished, while a neighbouring one was replete with corn; and of preventing cultivators from reaping the benefit of their plentiful harvest, by procuring to strangers a subsistence they might be in want of; and accordingly the wise laws we have been mentioning were enacted.

24 June,
1764.

23 July.

A declaration of the King, notifying an exemption from taxes and other imposts, for marshy lands that were dried up; and another, notifying a suspension, during three years, of the privileges of the officers of the King's household, as also, that the officers of the Courts of Justice should not enjoy any exemption from taxes, unless they resided upon the spot where their offices were established, continued to do honour to M. de Laverdy, because it was imagined they proceeded from him, and that he was employed in alleviating the lot of the country people. The mistake did not last long; it was

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17 Dec.
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soon discovered, that this Comptroller General was neither attached to Philosophers nor their science; and that thinking he was in possession of every kind of knowledge, he rejected every foreign information: he issued a declaration, forbidding to write, print, or publish any thing upon the reform or administration of the finances; it bears the marks of a low-minded, narrow, and trifling cast of character, and tending to despotism. In a word, his edict for paying off the debts of the State betrayed his folly. This edict, an eternal monument of shame for the Minister who conceived it, and the Parliament which registered it, not only brought no relief to the State, but even oppressed it with fresh imposts, and gave a greater extension to the old ones. The pretence was, the establishment of two treasuries, one for the payment of the annuities and bills due by the King, the other for the reimbursing and extinction of the capitals. To do this the more effectually, and to take in the whole of the debts at one view, all the bearers of contracts were obliged to have them renewed and examined; and the bearers of bills were to have them liquidated and turned into contracts; which were formalities as tedious and troublesome, as they were expensive, both to individuals and to the King. But as soon as this change was made, nothing more was to be required. His Majesty was much pleased with this arrangement, which put him at his ease. Having met the Duke de Bouillon, who was loaded with debt, the King asked him how his affairs went on? "Very badly, Sire," answered the Duke, imagining, perhaps, that he should awaken the Monarch's benevolence; "very badly; my creditors still torment

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"ment me exceedingly;" but the only consolation he received from the King was, *Why don't you do as I do? Laverdy has just cleared me.*

This clearing was, in fact, an additional load; for, in order to assume a stricter air of severity, the Comptroller General — very different from those who take no account of the injustices of their predecessors, and do not think themselves obliged to repair them — restored the reduced annuities upon the footing of the old capitals, but only for the reimbursement. This was a bait thrown out to his brethren of the Parliament, who had many of these annuities, and flattered themselves they should be reimbursed the first, though, according to the edict, this was only to be done by casting lots. It was even said, that the great bench was paid off immediately; which considerably facilitated the registering.

The Council was pleased with M. de Laverdy for this contrivance, which thus made the levying of the two *Vingtiemes*, and other imposts, legally valid; whereas otherwise this was only done by a registry entered at a Bed of Justice, a method always odious. The Parliament annihilated by this all their own remonstrances, and those of the other Parliaments; they seemed to come to an avowal of their fault, to own themselves guilty of an unreasonable resistance, and to acknowledge the justice of the strokes of authority, exerted with so much rigour against the provinces. Accordingly, the Court of Aids, more attentive to avoid this inconsistency, and to preserve the honour of the Magistracy, after various modifications, added these remarkable words:

"Our said Lord the King shall also be implored
"to render to the whole body of the Magistracy
"the

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" the justice due to them for the unheard-of violence
 " exercised against the several Courts of his king-
 " dom, and to remove the apprehensions of his peo-
 " ple, who, witnesses of the excesses which have been
 " committed against the Magistrates, have learnt
 " but too well what they had to fear, if such abuses
 " of the military authority were not suppressed by
 " the severest punishments. Ordered, that collated
 " copies of the present declaration, and also of the
 " present decree, be sent to the provinces, under the
 " jurisdiction of a Court of Subsidies, &c."

Another part of this edict, which had been singularly flattering to the Parliament, and, perhaps, had imposed in a certain degree upon the nation, was the establishment of a Chamber composed of the Members of that Company, to attend to the observance of the edict, to conduct all the operations of it, and to decide all the questions and disputes that might arise on account of them. But this Chamber proved only an additional burthen to the kingdom, from the salaries given to its members. Moreover, it did not put a stop to the embezzlement of the finances; it did not procure any exactness in the payments; the reimbursement of the capitals only took place once or twice, as much as was necessary to satisfy the engagements taken with the most distinguished members of this Company; and the disorder of the finances, instead of diminishing, only increased. On the one hand, it was necessary to supply the King's expences, who, having no acknowledged mistress, had many caprices, and was surrounded by greedy courtiers and favourites, who availed themselves of his easy disposition. On the other hand, the Duke de Choiseul's prodigalities,

10

who,

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who, not being more economical of the wealth of the State than of his own, acted the part of the petty sovereign in his way, and had still more creatures to gratify than his master.

M. de Laverdy, who, under an hypocritical air of modesty, entertained an unbounded ambition, not being able to remain in office, without supplying the continual demands of Lewis XV. and of his Minister, was incessantly employed in seeking out new resources; and as he had none in the branch of finances, which he did not in the least understand, he was obliged to receive all the ideas suggested to him by greedy subalterns. Every time there was a want of money, recourse was had to some new fiscal invention, which occasioned remonstrances from the Courts, for he could not always bribe; and sometimes patriotism or ill-humour prevailed. Nothing was more disgusting than the answers he suggested to the King, in which, joining the meanness of falsity to a ridiculous compassion, he incessantly assured, in his name, that his Majesty bore his subjects in his heart;—that it was against his will he increased the burthen of their imposts;—that he hoped soon to be in a condition to relieve them, by reforms; by economy, by a good administration, and by the improvement of the finances; while every thing which passed under the eyes of the nation, was a manifest contradiction to these declarations.

It was this Minister who contributed greatly to increase the troubles of Britany, by inroaching upon the rights of the States, by writing insolent letters to them, by afterwards assuming the character of author and historian, and by dispersing pamphlets, in which he cavilled with their writers, to destroy their privileges,

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leges, and establish the despotism of the King upon the ruins of their public right. One may still recollect with what contempt he was treated, in songs made upon him in this province. Ridicule was the only weapon turned against him, and with effect. The same was soon done at Paris; and, what mostly exasperated him, was a caricature, in which he was represented under the person of a man carrying a basket upon his shoulders, with a cane in his hand in form of a battle-ax (the distinction of the Comptroller General) searching in all the crossings, and in every heap of dirt. From the end of his cane some rolls of paper were coming out, intitled, *Decrees of Council*. He had spectacles upon his nose, and seemed very short-sighted: a natural as well as moral defect which he had. At the bottom of the print was written, *Au grand Cbiffonier de France* *. In parody of Vespasian, who had laid a tax upon urine, the derision of him was carried so far, as to address an anonymous project to him, for establishing public privies in barrows at the corner of the streets, into which one could not enter without paying a tax; a project of little expence, and which was to bring in a great deal to the Government. It became necessary to dismiss a Minister, who, being the ridicule of the Court, and of the city, began to excite murmurs and insurrections. The freedom granted to the corn trade, both within and without the kingdom, far from producing those salutary effects that were expected, formed a distressing period, from the enormous dearness of this commodity; a dearness which was kept up, and which, except some

* To the great ragman of France.

slight diminutions at intervals, lasted till the death of the King. Persons who adhered to old customs, and to prejudices, as well as those who profited by obstacles and constraints, attributed this calamity to the system of the innovators. The œconomists, on the contrary, threw the blame of it upon bad harvests, but still more upon the manner in which their plan had been modified. They pretended, that a half liberty was more pernicious than a total constraint. They defended themselves in this manner, not daring to reveal the true cause, which proceeded from powerful and secret manœuvres, that might have been traced even to the Throne, and the Ministers of which, being the intermediate agents, set several subalterns in motion, who, dreading neither infamy nor the public hatred, enriched themselves with the spoils of the people. The Government were happy to put a stop to inquiries, by fixing the attention of the public upon a disgraced Minister, who, being particularly intrusted with the administration of the corn, seemed responsible for all the evils of dearth. Such were the politics of the end of the reign of Lewis XV. When the measure of iniquity was full, the author was dismissed, but his work remained.

M. de Laverdy—who, upon his entering into the office of Comptroller General, had wished to keep his own house, in order to retire to it when he should return to a private life;—who had given in a state of his moderate fortune, from a desire that it should not be increased during his management of the finances;—who, being a son-in-law of a woollen-draper, son of a lawyer, and himself of the commonalty, wished never to quit this class of men, and had suffered himself to be intreated three times before

1768. before he entered into the Ministry—went out of it a very different man. A genealogy was made out for him, in which he claimed a long possession of nobility of a very ancient race, and became capable of aspiring to the highest honours. He wanted to be honorary Counsellor of the Parliament, honorary Member of the Academy of *Belles Lettres*, and his vanity was hurt at not having remained long enough in office to be decorated with the Blue Riband. Some person, in order to pay his court to him, having offered him an exorbitant price for his little house in the street *des Blancs-manteaux*, he sold it, and the King gave him, and rebuilt for him, the small hotel of Conti, to embellish which, even the hotel of the Mint was blocked up, in the part that was contiguous to it. He caused his father-in-law, who was very rich, and retired from trade, to make a second fortune, more considerable than the former. He procured also a great fortune to his brothers-in-law, and to all his family, and himself, possessing a revenue of two hundred thousand livres*, had reason to write to his daughters, in announcing to them his retirement, *that he was no longer in the finances*. This was the expression he made use of, and which characterized exactly the manner in which he had managed his office to his own emolument.

27 Sept.

The Duke de Choiseul appointed M. Maynon d'Invaux his successor. His gratitude towards this Counsellor of State, the sagacity he thought he had observed in his reports to the Council, in a word, his mild and moderate disposition, rendered him, in his opinion, worthy of this trust, and he suf-

* Upwards of eight thousand pounds.

ferred

ferred himself to be blinded by friendship. Besides, as the Comptroller General was now nothing more than a First Clerk, distinguished by the title of *Chief of the Council of Finance*—a dignity which the Duke de Choiseul had restored for the Duke de Praslin, who, himself satisfied with receiving the rich emoluments of the office, acted only under the influence of his cousin—the Duke de Choiseul flattered himself, that he might assist and direct his favourite with his counsels; but he did not find in him the man he expected. M. d'Invaux, of a weak state of health, and incapable of much application, was unable either to support the burthen by himself, or to obey the violent impulse of his leader; he was equally deficient in power to do good or evil. He did not stay long in office. The only thing he can be reproached with, is, by a blind complaisance for the two Ministers, and other persons of the Court, who had formed speculative calculations of fortune upon the suspension of the charter of the India Company, to have ventured the first attack upon this establishment, the antiquity and magnificence of which, as well as the name of it's founder, ought to have intitled it to more respect. It seems, that this stain has not done any injury to his reputation, which he owes perhaps less to himself, than to his predecessor and his successor. However this may be, the public were pleased with the courage he had, to send in his resignation after the meeting of a Council, in which his projects were not approved, and still more with his having intreated the King to permit him to refuse the customary pension, and, as he had not been of any use

1768.

use to the State during his Ministry, that he might not at least be a burthen to it in his retirement from business. He was succeeded by the famous Abbé Terrai, who will soon distinguish himself in the circle of Ministers co-operating to subvert the constitution of the State, and to complete the ruin of the finances and of the King's credit. The party of the Choiseul's began to decline. The new Comptroller General was created by the Chancellor Maupeou, who, meditating on his part a great revolution in the Magistracy, was in want of such an assistant.

The Parliaments were in a more violent ferment than ever. The seeds of discord sown among them by the pre-eminence granted to the Parliament of Paris, had produced only a momentary division. A concern of a more urgent nature obliged them to re-unite. If, by the removal of those rulers who had molested them, they had reassumed, according to the expression of a celebrated Attorney General, *le haut du pavé* *, this had not been for a long time. The silence which the Court had imposed on them upon this point, and the favours of another kind, with which these Courtiers had been loaded, could not make them expect a true calm. The storm soon raged again, and with greater violence. The destruction of the Parliament of Pau, to which the other Parliaments did not oppose themselves with sufficient strength, and which was restored at the pleasure of the Ministers, encouraged them to bolder enterprizes; and the two Attornies General of Ren-

June
1765.

* *The upper hand.* This Attorney General was M. de la Chaulotais, in a letter to his son, printed at the trial.

nes,

1768.

nes, as well as several Counsellors of that Court, at the eve of losing their heads, made the Magistrates of the other Courts sensible of the necessity of redoubling their efforts to save these brethren, and of claiming their privilege *of being tried by their Peers*. This trial is what is called *the affair of Britany*, one of the most incredible transactions in the reign of Lewis XV.

It took its rise from the decrees issued against the Jesuits ||; and in the accounts given on this subject, M. de la Chalotais, the author of these writings, appeared the most formidable adversary they had in Britany; and, not having been able to prevent their destruction, they thought of availing themselves of the powerful party they had in this province, in order to excite troubles there, and make it the center of their intrigues to procure their restoration, or at least to avenge themselves. The States of 1762, had furnished them with the opportunity of beginning. The Bishops, with Desnos, the Bishop of Rennes, at their head, were for them. Almost all the Order of the Clergy, with some members of the Nobility, composed a considerable number, supported and protected by the Commandant, who, moreover, disposed of the Commonalty.

Their object had been, to invalidate the decrees that had dissolved the Society in Britany, as being made against the rights of the States—to oppose these rights to those of the Parliaments—and to set the nation against itself. Their partizans were very

|| This narrative is partly taken from a manuscript memorial of M. de la Chalotais, which is in the library of the Duke de Rohan.

1768. warm; some gentlemen of quality used menacing expressions to each other upon the *théâtre* §, and the Duke d'Aiguillon, who ought to have put a stop to these excesses, indirectly gave a sanction to them by his silence. They returned three times to the charge; and some letters, real or fictitious, of the late Dauphin, were clandestinely read, or caused to be read, to excite the people in favour of the Jesuits; and if these commotions had been left to take their free course, they would probably have brought on a civil war in the province, which would soon after have diffused itself through the whole kingdom.

M. de la Chalotais, as much interested by motives of self-love, and personal safety, as of patriotism, in supporting an affair of which he had been the chief instigator, averted the troubles which the Commandant—alternately protected by the Jesuits, or protecting them—was endeavouring to excite in their favour. He gave previous information to the Duke de Choiseul of their complicated manœuvres, which being detected, lost all their effect in the States. But the Society thought, notwithstanding, that they had gained a considerable point, in making their quarrel personal to the Duke d'Aiguillon, who was become an implacable enemy to their opponent. Proud of this Chief, they laid the plan of succeeding in another manner.

There were in Britany general complaints against the administration of the Commandant concerning

§ The name given to the place where the General Assembly of the three Orders of the State is holden.

the

the great roads. The Parliament had taken them into consideration, and, as the Magistrates who brought the complaints were the same as had appeared in opposition to the Jesuits, these and the Duke d'Aiguillon joined themselves to effect their destruction. By a stroke of policy worthy of these Fathers, in provoking the vanity of the Comptroller, General Laverdy, they made this conceited man, who was an outrageous Jansenist, and had been one of their most indefatigable enemies in the Company, concur indirectly in their project. Exasperated at being made the sport of the province, he seconded the Duke d'Aiguillon in multiplying the strokes of authority against it, and against the Parliament. He was carried so far from his own measures, that, by a series of incomprehensible proceedings, several of which were prepared with so much artifice that it was impossible to avoid the snare, the Magistrates were hurried into the resolution of giving in their resignations, which scarce any one of them wished to do.

The Jesuits and their partizans, thus being masters of the field, held all the assemblies and all the conventicles they thought proper; the result of which was to complete their work in the province by the destruction of M. de la Chalotais, whom they could not forgive for the accounts he had published, in which he had so eloquently displayed the defects in the constitution and management of the Order, and who, during the Assembly of the States, had opposed their manœuvres with all his power. His son, and some Magistrates who had been the most earnest in opposing them, were to become victims

1768. of the plot by implication. All the circumstances were favourable to the success of it; they had for them the Commandant of the province, and his uncle the Count de St. Florentin, who had Brittany in his department—who, from his post, being the interpreter of the will of the Sovereign, was thus both judge and party, and had been infamous enough not to except against himself on such an occasion. They had some other members of the Parliament, the only ones that remained, and were ready to form a tribunal which was to be totally devoted to them. In a word, they had the King likewise, who was so highly offended and incensed against the people of Brittany, that he was determined not to grant them any favour of any kind: he had apprized the Ministers of this, and even the one who had the dispensation of ecclesiastical favours*.

The desolation prevailing in the province by the dispersion of the Parliament, produced murmurs, complaints, pamphlets, and acts of despair, of which, even advantages were taken. It is most probable that, under favour of this general ferment, pieces were drawn up proper for their design, and laid to the charge of the malecontents. Already a process was begun at Paris, concerning divers intrigues practised to excite confusion, respecting several defamatory libels, as well in prose as in verse, tending to attack the honour and reputation of certain Magistrates, or other zealous subjects devoted to

* This anecdote is to be found in a letter of M. Piquet de Montreuil, Counsellor of the Grand Chamber of the Parliament of Brittany, dated from Versailles, the 28th of December 1764, and deposited at the trial.

Government,

1769.

Government, and relating to many anonymous letters injurious to the Royal authority, addressed to the Ministers. The cognizance of these matters had been referred to the Parliament of the capital; and while they were employed in this business, fresh acts of violence were carrying on.

In the night from the 10th to the 11th of November, 1765, Messieurs de Chalotais, father and son, and three Counsellors of the deposed Parliament, were carried off by armed men, with the most scandalous apparatus. It was afterwards made public by an act of Royalty, in which the King himself was made the accuser, that these Magistrates had been represented to him as equally enemies to his authority and to public tranquillity. It was said, that they were with reason suspected of having for some time past endeavoured to excite and foment dangerous commotions in Britany; that, in order to succeed in this, they had formed unlawful assemblies among themselves, had entered into criminal associations, and had kept up suspicious correspondences—that, not satisfied with defaming, by several libels, those who had shewed their attachment to the King's service, they had undertaken to distribute writings drawn up with a spirit of independence, which had made them hold the most seditious discourses in public—that, in a word, they had carried their boldness to such a height, as to cause anonymous letters to reach the Court, injurious to the person of the Monarch, and derogatory to the Royal Majesty.

Upon such vague accusations, a monstrous process was begun, no similar instance of which has ever appeared in the annals of justice. To keep up the

Letters
Patent, of
the 16th
of Nov.
1765.

1769.

appearance of regularity, and more effectually to deceive the King, an offer was made to the Parliament of Britany assembled, to return their resignations, and suffer them to try their confined members. This manœuvre was intended to propagate a belief that their crime was thoroughly ascertained; that at least they were accused with fairness, and with the greatest impartiality, since no other tribunal was required than that very one which the law allowed them; but at the same time, to this offer was added a condition, which it was impossible for the Magistrates to fulfil, namely, by resuming their functions again, to betray their honour, their oath, and their country. The matter turned out as it had been foreseen. The Parliament, deliberating upon the orders of the King, settled that the motives which had determined them to the act of resignation still remained in full force, and they therefore persisted in it: even some of those who had not resigned before, acceded to the act upon this occasion. This was what was desired. Encouraged therefore by the example of the Parliament of Pau, it was resolved to form anew that of Rennes upon the same footing, and in the mean while it was provisionally holden by the Council. As soon as this Court was opened, letters patent were directed to it, to proceed to the trial of the Magistrates accused. Having then recruited the corps with some of the dismissed officers, it appeared for a time that the cognizance of the affair was to be referred to them. This manœuvre had been concerted with them, who, being no less enemies of these illustrious prisoners — whose firmness was a perpetual reproach of their baseness — did not, however, dare to give the judgement wished for by the Court,

12 Nov.
1765.

26 Nov.

16 Jan.
1766.

1769.

Court, and gave up a right, the enjoyment of which, though they were at liberty to refuse, yet they could not deprive the prisoners of it. This furnished a pretence for ordering the Commissioners to continue the inquiry, and for this purpose new letters patent were issued, signifying the establishment of a commission from the King's Council, to hold a Royal Court of Justice at Saint Malo's.

24 Jan.
1766.

It was in that town that this *Sham Tribunal**, which had disappeared from Rennes, was reproduced. It was there that, after having experienced all the revolutions, all the modifications, all the changes of places, and of marches, which the Commandant of the province, the secret instigator of this machination, chose—circumstances which occasioned as many variations in the proceedings;—it was there that, with new formalities created for this affair—with laws multiplied for it alone, fabricated by the accuser, successively derogating from each other, and proportioned to days, minutes, and to the difficulties that arose—a *code* was invented on purpose to criminate the accused persons, and to effect their condemnation. Already was every thing prepared for the execution of a sentence settled at Versailles previous to the departure of the Commissioners—and, if an uncontroverted tradition may be credited, the executioner was set out, with all the instruments for the business, which was to have been hastily performed in the citadel of Saint Malo—when the vigorous remonstrances of the Parliament of Paris awakened a salutary remorse in the heart of the Monarch. The

* An expression made use of in the *Remonstrances of the Parliament* sitting at Rouen, addressed to the King, in 1766.

1769.

Duke de Choiseul went to the King at the very time when he was tormented with dreadful anxiety: he improved his emotion, and caused the decree of blood to be revoked.

17 Feb.
1766.

The affair took another turn, the powers of the Commissioners ceased, the continuation of the process came before the natural judges, who had been constantly claimed by the prisoners; but these natural judges being only in small numbers—either gained over by favours or intimidated by threats—could not constitute the true Parliament, which existed in the exiled members. M. de la Chalotais, and his fellow accused, declined being judged by that tribunal, in the state it was, inasmuch as it was unable to take cognizance of the cause of an individual, much less of one respecting the members of a Court, who had a right to be judged by all the Chambers assembled; and they therefore required to be referred to the Parliament of Bourdeaux *. The information of the cause was not less continued at the suit of M. Geoffroy de la Ville-Blanche, Counsellor, appointed Attorney General for that purpose, although he had declared, in order that he might be excepted against, his great enmity to M. de Caradeuc. All the proceedings in this cause were a singular compound of irregularity and despotism, in which order seemed now and then to be reverted to, merely that it might afterwards be departed from in a more extraordinary manner. By a decree of Council, it was ordered,

* This Parliament is pointed out by the ordonnance of 1737, to be substituted to that of Rennes, in case wherein the latter is not in a condition to take cognizance of the affairs brought before them.

that

1769.

that the proceedings of the Parliament of Paris, concerning the first troubles in Britany, should be sent back to the office of the Parliament of that province, to be added to the criminal process which was going on there; and accordingly, in the Easter vacation, those pieces were carried off in a forcible manner from the Recorder, who was so much confounded at this extra-judicial act, that he had the weakness to give them up.

After this re-union, another separation took place; at length a reference to the Council, and the removal of the prisoners to the Bastille: this occasioned fresh remonstrances from them, who persisted in requiring to be judged by the tribunal pointed out by the law. Then it was, that, in a solemn assembly of the Council of the parties, where the King assisted, after an historical detail made by M. le Noir, the Recorder, who finished his speech by inviting the King to mercy, his Majesty said, that it was unnecessary he should know any thing more about the matter, and that he would not have any sentence passed. He at the same time gave orders for the extinction of all offences and accusations upon that subject, which took place by letters from the great seal.

While the Sovereign's wisdom, moderation, and goodness were extolled, by a manifest contradiction, he was made to exercise the most revolting tyranny. The Magistrates, when they left the Bastille, not only were not reinstated in their functions, but his Majesty was made to declare, that he would never restore his confidence nor his good graces to those Attornies General. They were all banished, with exceeding severity, and were not even allowed to see their friends or relations before they went.

The

9 July,
1766.21 Nov.
1766.

14 Dec.

1769.

22 Jan.

1767.

The Parliament of Paris insisting upon the inconsistency of a punishment, still capable of keeping up suspicions against the accused, the King declared, that *their honour was not called in question*. Thus it is, that by miserable subterfuges, suggested to the private revenge of Lewis XV. their enemies gratified their own. They had piqued the vanity of the King by intercepted letters, wherein the Magistrates, without offending the Majesty of the throne, treated the man with a degree of frankness to which he was unaccustomed.

They languished still several years, during which time neither their repeated memorials, nor the solicitations of the Courts, could operate any thing in their favour. In a word, though their innocence had been acknowledged, they could not obtain any legal mode of justification; but were constantly the victims, and their oppressors triumphed: a species of iniquity adapted to the horrid period of the age which is the object of our present attention.

Such a conduct, far from restoring peace to the province of Britany, as the King had been flattered that it would, served only to increase the disturbances. The cabals of the Jesuits continued still to excite discord in all parts. The Parliament, a vain phantom, bereft of it's ancient splendour, was no longer the sanctuary of justice, but a receptacle of iniquity; a ridiculous tribunal, called the *Bailiwick of Aiguillon*. The divided States saw the strokes of authority multiplied against their expiring liberty. The Order of Nobility still struggled against the two other Orders, which were entirely subdued, but were themselves inwardly agitated by a schism, excited by the intrigues of the Commandant. This man—who was

an absolute despot, surrounded with spies, informers, and ministers of his fury, and who was master of the letters *de Cachet*, which his uncle the Minister gave out at pleasure—depopulated the province of its defenders, by dint of exiles and proscriptions*. In a word, he had undertaken to accomplish the total destruction of the constitution of Britany, in causing to be registered by command a terrible statute, consisting of two hundred and thirty-one articles; the insidious arrangements of which tended for the most part to erect into a law all the innovations he had introduced, all the abuses of authority he had committed, all the violences he had attempted, and, in a word, a statute entirely subversive of the privileges and ancient customs, as well in the form as in the matter.

Fortunately for the inhabitants of Britany, this was the end of the administration of the Commandant. The measure of his iniquities was full, and the nation, in despair, might have been induced to proceed to the most dreadful extremities: it was under this point of view, at least, that the Duke de Choiseul—a personal enemy to the Duke d'Aiguillon, of whose excessive ambition he stood in awe—represented matters to the Monarch, in order to raise his fears. After having inspired him with anxiety concerning the statute, he described the troubles it would necessarily occasion in the ensuing session of the States, and suggested the plan of convoking, an extra-session, in which it might be more freely adopted. This Mi-

* See the *Answer of the States of Britany to the memorial of the Duke d'Aiguillon*, in which are computed 134 letters *de Cachet* given out in the course of about three years.

1769.

nister knew how the King was to be managed; who would have refused to destroy at once an odious matter, executed by his orders. He spoke only of softening, and modifications, which would not call his authority in question, and which, by preserving the necessary dispositions to contain the tumultuous commotions of the States, would more effectually enslave the Nobility, when they should have concurred in forging their own chains. In order the better to seduce his master, he proposed that this commission should be given to the President Ogier, a man personally agreeable to his Majesty, whose mild and conciliating disposition he was fond of, and in whom he reposed an entire confidence. Besides, he was a lawyer, very well versed in the forms, and who, stripped of all the military apparatus of the Commandant, would only have the appearance of a peace-maker. Lewis XV. consented, or rather suffered himself to be drawn into this measure, and the Commissioner was appointed.

The Duke d'Aiguillon, who was sensible where the stroke would fall, dissembled his resentment, but he endeavoured by his emissaries to escape it, by fomenting the spirit of faction, which it was his interest at this instant to keep up. Having set his venal writers at work, he caused to be printed and published, almost on the eve of the extraordinary assembly of 1768, a pamphlet, entitled, *Dialogues*, in which two or three speakers acted the part of idiots, to inculcate the whole Order of the Nobility, and feed dissension*. The Parliament of Brittany had it too much at heart, to shew that a calm

February
1768.

* See *The Answer of the States, &c.*

would

1769.

would succeed to the storm, as soon as the President Ogier should appear. There never was more harmony prevailing in the Assemblies, never more union between the Orders. The circumstance which the Duke de Choiseul had predicted, in order to induce the vanity of the Monarch to give way, happened as he had said. The opinion of confining themselves to intreat his Majesty, that he would be pleased to withdraw the monstrous code of legislation, which the States complained of, to dispense them even from deliberating upon it, because, according to right and ancient privileges, it belonged to them to make their own statutes under his good pleasure—this opinion, which was strongly supported by the partizans of the Commandant, who affected at that time to defend the interest of the province, which they had so often violated, was rejected. They contented themselves, after a respectful protest, with examining it one article after another; and authority, which is always encroaching, preserved all its influence. The President was obliged to make the eulogium of the Bretons at Court, and it was decided that the Duke of Duras should be the person to hold the Grand Assembly of the States.

All these changes must of necessity have brought about the return of the Parliament, which in fact was effected a year after, to which even were reunited the four Magistrates † involved in the process of the Attornies General, who were the only persons whom the King would never forgive, con-

† Messrs. Charette, de la Gascherie, Piquet de Montreuil, Charette de la Coliniere, who were the first arrested, and de Kiralaun, arrested afterwards.

tenting

1769.

tending himself always with declaring them innocent, but still pretending to have private reasons for detaining them in exile. The Attornies General availed themselves of this rigour, to have recourse again to their corps, and to demand justification, which they had solicited in vain from all the tribunals: this brought on the extraordinary cause tried before the Court of Peers; a singular event, beyond all those which had contributed to bring it on, and which was terminated by a still more singular conclusion, the fore-runner of the absolute destruction of all order, of the Magistracy, and of the laws.

M. Lamoignon de Blanc-Mesnil had severe reproaches to make to himself, on account of his too great facility in yielding to the despotism of the Court. Being at the head of the Magistracy, he had seen, for the course of ten years, continual storms rising under his influence against the members of that body; he had inflicted one exile after another, had issued mandates, and occasioned imprisonments, at Paris, at Bourdeaux, at Aix, at Rouen, at Rennes, at Besançon, at Grenoble, and at Toulouse; he had given general and particular attacks to the Courts of Magistracy, sometimes by the establishment of a *Chambre Royale*—sometimes by instigating the people of the Grand Council against all the classes of the Parliaments—sometimes by sowing the seeds of division between the States and the Parliament of the same province. He had at last found out the abyss he was insensibly digging under the foundations of the tottering State; he had shuddered at it, and in his remorse had refused to suffer the principle of dissolution—that is, the substitution of authority to law, which he had too much encouraged—to gain any further

1769.

ther ground. He had equally refused to give in his resignation; and, in a state of inaction less ignominious than all his exertions, in an exile more calm than the day of his prosperity, he lamented the evils, of which he might, however, consider himself as the principal author.

M. de Maupeou had been substituted to him, who had for several years expected the reward of his defection, and, not being able by any insinuations to determine M. de Blanc-Mesnil to receive him as his successor, had caused himself to be appointed Vice-Chancellor, when he obtained the seals; a phantom of a title, which he enjoyed only in the Almanack. The Parliament refused to acknowledge him, and the Magistrates, playing upon his title, characterized him energetically, by calling him *le Vice* *. He was a fine speaker, very ignorant, very supple, and under whose administration passed all those horrors we have just been describing.

4 Oct.
1763.

It was under his Chancellorship that the famous session was holden by the King in the Parliament, called the *flagellation*, because it resembled much that of Lewis XIV. when he went into the Court with his whip in his hand. Lewis XV. solemnly proscribed in it all the pretended innovations of the Courts, especially that word of *Class*, which shocked the ears of the Ministers; and advanced there that strange assertion, that *he held his crown only from God*. Not satisfied with having thus published it, he ordered the Parliaments of the provinces to bring up their registers, that they might see the answer in-

3 March
1766.

* *The Vice*. See the several letters inserted in the printed trial of M. de la Chalotais.

1769.

serted in them in the General Assembly, and with proper ceremony. It was then apparent what enraged authority was capable of doing, in one single day, against the aggrandizement of the Magistracy during fifteen years. The several Companies returned sorrowfully home, and issued quiet decrees, wherein they did not even dare to combat the falsity of the revolting proposition above mentioned. They were so much confounded at the stroke, that the word *Class* has never since appeared in any of their writings.

If this vigorous step of the King had been kept up, there would have been no resource left, and despotism would have triumphed from that moment. Fortunately, dissensions prevailed among the Ministers, and each of them separately shewed considerations to the Magistracy for their own particular views. The Comptroller General had edicts to pass; the Vice Chancellor was constantly aspiring to the full dignity of Chancellor; the Duke de Choiseul, especially, did not choose that the Duke d'Aiguillon should succeed in the affair of Britany. He underhand urged the Attornies General to avail themselves of their former advantages; and the Magistrates to support them. By the retreat of M. Molé, who had missed obtaining the seals, which he thought due to his name, and to his zeal—and who besides was tired of the difficult part of maintaining himself at Court, without betraying his Company—the Parliament had at their head the son of the Vice Chancellor, more intriguing, more subtle, and more flagitious than his father; since, to all his faults, he added hypocrisy: he only considered him as the guardian of a place, which his ambition already devoured, and to him
his

his father was only a rival, to be supplanted at a convenient opportunity. He had attached himself to the Duke de Choiseul, as to the person in supreme power at that time; he meanly paid his court to him, and received from him the impulse he gave to his Company; which growing bolder, notwithstanding the prohibitions of the King, still persisted in claiming the trial of Messrs. de la Chalotais, in proportion as the unskilfulness of the Vice Chancellor engaged him in any false step; and the Parliaments of the provinces, in imitation of that of Paris, resumed the same business. The Monarch, incapable of keeping himself steady, and agitated between his Ministers, soon gave way, in hopes of finding the tranquillity he was in search of, and could not obtain. He had no sooner made one retrograde step, than advantage was taken of it, to induce him to another. It is from the midst of those several contradictions, that the First President De Maupeou, hoped soon to see his grandeur rise. He knew that his father, embarrassed with the two Parliaments destroyed, and with the Grand Council dismissed, and to be restored, after having plunged the King into a labyrinth of difficulties not to be unravelled, would never have sufficient resources in his understanding to extricate his Majesty from them. This was the instant he waited for, as the one in which the Prince, happy in resigning to him the conduct of his affairs, would be forced to take him for his only adviser, to give himself blindly up to his direction, and permit him to strike all the blows his vengeance might suggest to him.

The affairs of religion were not more settled than those of the Magistracy. Since the death of

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Cardinal de la Rochefoucault, they were in the hands of M. de Jarente, Bishop of Digne, and afterwards of Orleans. This was one of the *roués* * of the Court, in the strongest acceptation of the term—who having been at the disposal of the favourite while she lived, had afterwards devoted himself to the Duke de Choiseul—who led the most dissolute life, selling benefices without shame, and which were often bestowed as the reward of the most infamous practices. We may readily conceive that this Prelate, who followed in every thing the steps of Cardinal Dubois, though without his genius, had no more regard for the Jansenists, than the Molinists. He had neither the power, nor the behaviour, proper to impose upon either one or the other party:—equally despised by the Clergy and the Magistracy, he let himself go to the torrent, as the wind blew from the Court.

The zealous among the Bishops wished to avail themselves of the Decennial assembly of 1765, to complete the work begun in that of 1755, and to settle a fixed opinion upon the Bull *Unigenitus*; which, having existed more than half a century, without doing any good, had, on the contrary, been productive of so much mischief. They succeeded in forming a body of doctrine upon this point, under the title of Acts of the Clergy, in 1765; and, being well aware, that the suppression of it would be ordered by the Parliament, when they separated, they made a public and gratuitous distribution of it to all the faithful; who being either appointed on purpose, or assembled by chance, at the great Augustins, received the spiritual consolation. The Magistrates

* One that deserves to be hanged.

did

did not delay to exert themselves against this fresh monument of fanaticism, in which they were personally offended; and this gave it a degree of consistence, which of itself it would never have had. This work, in which it was meant to make God speak, by enlightening the people upon the object of their faith, was not only unworthy of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, but very indifferent as a human production; it had been drawn up with so much precipitation and ignorance, that it became the derision of the wicked, the scandal of the weak, and excited the indignation of the learned part of the Clergy. Had it not been for the eclat made by the Parliament upon this subject, it would have had no effect, and made no noise, for few people would have read it. The decrees of that body made it be known, and occasioned the opposition of some zealous Curates, who read these Acts in their pulpits, and had warrants issued against them. The Court, more incapable than ever of vigorous decisions, endeavoured only to maintain itself between the two parties, without suffering either of them to incroach too much. They issued a decree of Council in explanation of those Acts, with regard to what interested his Majesty's authority, which the Magistrates pretended to be called in question, and at the same time to insure to the ecclesiastical powers, the essential rights which they had received from Heaven, and which the Bishops were incessantly claiming. Nobody was satisfied. The Prelates represented, that, in determining the limits of the two powers, the King had left an ambiguity with regard to theirs, from whence disagreeable consequences might be deduced. The Parliament remonstrated, upon the circumstance that this decree

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concerned the Bull *Unigenitus*, as a law of the Church, and of the State, and by that means kept up the schism; upon the annulling of their decrees; upon fresh refusals of administering the Sacraments; and upon recent interdictions pronounced by the Archbishop of Paris. It was impossible to determine which object should be first attended to, and confusion prevailed more than ever in this branch of administration. Sometimes the Parliament was suffered to proceed, and it was thought they triumphed; when their victims were suddenly taken from them by letters *de Cachet*. It was not ventured to re-establish those Priests, against whom warrants were issued; but pensions, or better livings, were given to them. If the Parliament attempted to attack the Superiors, who were the most guilty, their proceedings were immediately stopped—the affair was prolonged—it was made to degenerate into an object of contest and formalities—it was made everlasting by delays. The Court employed six months in giving an answer to the celebrated remonstrances upon the Acts;—it was very long, and decided nothing definitively. The most singular circumstance, if any thing could appear singular at that time, was, that the Council of Dispatches, in which these matters were agitated, had for President the Vice Chancellor de Maupeou, who, during the great commotions, had presided over the Parliament, and had established the clearest and most uncontrovertible principles against the schism:—that M. de Laverdy, who, when he quitted that Company, was one of the most violent Jansenists they had, used to speak in this Council, and often influenced the votes:—in a word, that this Council was instigated by the Duke de Choiseul, an enemy to the Clergy, desirous of securing

ing the good-will of the Magistracy, and a Minister of as haughty and decisive a turn as ever had appeared.

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All these matters are explained by the irresolute disposition of the Sovereign, who, perpetually deceived in the means he was made to employ, had renounced all views of propriety. He had searched for it at first, and his exquisite judgment had made him perceive it; but he had not had the courage to carry these good designs into execution of his own accord. Led astray by a multitude of perverse counsellors, he could not return to them again, and had arrived to that height of indifference, which made him only desirous of deceiving himself with regard to the situation of his kingdom, and of gaining time, by avoiding all violent commotions, which might have disturbed his tranquillity.

It might have been imagined, that this way of thinking would have induced him to choose a Prime Minister. But his vanity was repugnant to such an act of weakness in a Prince, who had been half a century upon the throne; he had not the courage to put it in execution: in some respects, indeed, the Duke de Choiseul was really Prime Minister. Lewis XV. liked his easy method of doing business, which spared him every kind of application; but he disliked his violent and positive disposition, and, apprehending that he might assume too great an ascendant, he sometimes brought other Ministers and Courtiers into competition with him, who, availing themselves of this instant of favour, proved to the Duke that his was to be shaken. He soon, indeed, regained the superiority, but always under the authority of the Sovereign, who, not being able himself

1769. to contain him, contrasted him with another rival. But notwithstanding this management, and although every thing was done in his name, yet his situation was the circumstance that least engaged his attention; every operation bore the stamp of the genius of the man in whom he had confided. And as he often varied in the choice of the person on whom he bestowed his confidence, or rather, that he gave it to the man who knew how to avail himself of the instant, the Government felt the effects of this instability.

It is the resolution that Lewis XV. had taken, to separate himself in some measure from his kingdom, and to distinguish in himself two persons; almost always opposite—the Monarch, and the private man—which furnishes us with the key of several other parts of his life. We have seen that he continued to give his intimacy and familiarity to those, whom, as King, he had disgraced—to Maillebois, to Clermont, and to Richelieu. In the same manner, he kept those at a distance, whom he could not avoid esteeming for their services rendered to the State, and for their patriotism—the Prince of Conti, M. de Chalotais, and all those Magistrates who supported the rights of his Crown, and whom he detested. Thus it is, that while he suffered the Parliament to humble, to torment, and to vex the Prelates, he drew near to his person the most fanatic of them, and admitted them to his table. At the ceremony of the consecration of the parish of Choisy-le-Roy, the Archbishop of Paris, who performed it in presence of his Majesty, assisted by the Archbishops of Arles, of Tours, of Besançon, of Toulouse, and of Albi, and by the Bishops of Grenoble,

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of Chartres, of Orleans, of Meaux, of Metz, and of Autun—all the consecrating Prelates—those who had attended at this pious spectacle—and the two Agents General of the Clergy, had the honour to dine with him. Thus it is, that while he signed the decree of proscription of the Jesuits, he preserved them at his Court. But the most incredible adventure in this way, is one ascertained since his death, and which contributes singularly to unfold the incomprehensible character of this Prince.

We may recollect the extraordinary trial which happened after the peace, between Count Guerchy, Ambassador of France in England, and the Chevalier d'Eon, who had been Minister Plenipotentiary in the interim. It occasioned great surprize at that time, to see the boldness with which the latter insulted and abused the Count, and still more, that he should continue to live with impunity at London, and distribute the most outrageous pamphlets against his adversary. The quarto volume, intituled, *Letters, Memoirs, and Private Negotiations, &c.* was not only disgraceful to the Count, but attacked also the most powerful persons at that time—the Duke de Choiseul, the Duke de Praslin, the Duke de Nivernois, and even the Marchioness of Pompadour. Their narrowness of mind was discovered in them by their own dispatches; and we may perceive how much self-love must have been irascible upon such an occasion. We have learned since, that, in fact, it was in agitation to carry off the Chevalier d'Eon, which was to be done with the King's consent, and that, in the mean time his Majesty, who had desired to know the manner in which the project was to be carried into execution, and who had been for a long time in

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private correspondence with this confidant, gave him intelligence of all that was passing, and informed him of the means of being upon his guard, to disconcert the schemes of the persons who were to carry him off. Besides all this, some time after, Lewis XV. granted him a private pension of twelve thousand livres *, the form of which, conceived in the following terms, is signed and written entirely with his own hand.

"In consequence of the services which M. d'Eon has rendered me, as well in Russia as in my armies, and in other commissions which I have given him—I settle upon him an annual income of twelve thousand livres, which I will cause to be paid to him exactly every six months, in whatever country he may be (except in an enemy's country in time of war) and this till I shall think proper to give him some post, the appointments of which shall be more considerable than the present income.—At Versailles, the 1st of April, 1766.

"(Signed) LEWIS."

It has appeared since, that this Chevalier, who always remained at London 'till the death of the King, served him as a spy, not so much upon the English, as upon his Ambassador: a circumstance which any other person would have made more effectually to concur in the great views of politics, and of which he made no other advantage than to amuse himself, and to laugh at the expence of his Ministers.

* Five hundred pounds.

This Chevalier d'Eon, who has since been transformed into a woman, and who probably partakes of both sexes, deserves to be more particularly known. She relates her history in the following manner:—Born at Tonnerre, Mademoiselle d'Eon, a Lady according to her own confession, was in the tenderest age endowed with a prudence capable of seconding the political views of her parents, who made her pass for a boy. She was sent to Paris, and placed at the College Mazarin, where we may conceive how much disgust, labour, and fatigue, she must have experienced, to go through the several exercises of body and mind, without betraying the secrets of her sex, which was never suspected. To the study of the Belles Lettres, succeeded that of the Laws. She was received Doctor in Civil, then in Canon Law, and afterwards Counsellor. Already known by several works, she had an opportunity of introducing herself to the Prince of Conti, who honoured her family with a particular protection. Russia was then at variance with France, it was an important matter to reconcile these two Courts: a mysterious agent was wanted without a title, and yet capable of insinuation, and of fulfilling the delicate commission he was to be charged with. The Prince of Conti thought he had found in Mademoiselle d'Eon all the necessary qualifications, and proposed her to Lewis XV. who was fond of such mysteries. He readily accepted the female negotiator; who, upon her approach to Petersbourg, assumed the dress of her real sex, and succeeded so well in her business, that his Majesty was pleased to send her a second time into Russia, with the Chevalier Douglas. She had then resumed

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resumed her manly dress, and went through this second character with still more finesse, since it is affirmed, that she was not even discovered by the Empress. The aim of her negotiations was, to determine Russia to form an alliance with the Courts of Vienna and Versailles, rather than with Prussia. When the treaty was signed, Mademoiselle d'Eon was commissioned to carry the news to the King. She broke her leg upon the road. This accident, however, did not stop her, and she arrived at Versailles six-and-thirty hours before the Courier who had been dispatched from Vienna at the instant of her departure. The King, delighted, ordered his surgeon to take particular care of Mademoiselle d'Eon, and gave her a Lieutenancy of Dragoons, which she desired. She served in the last campaigns, then re-entered the career of politics, and was sent Secretary of Embassy to London, where she made herself so agreeable to that Court, that his Britannic Majesty, contrary to custom, chose her to carry to Versailles, and to the Duke of Bedford his Ambassador at Paris, the ratification of the treaty of peace concluded between the two nations. It was upon this occasion, that the King gave her the Cross of Saint Louis. He had already bestowed two pensions upon her. It must indeed be acknowledged, that she is the most extraordinary person of the age. We have several times seen women metamorphosed into men, and doing their duty in the war; but we have seen no one who has united so many military, political, and literary talents.

The anecdote which has been also revealed to us by Count Broglio, proves still more strongly what we have said of the character of the late King. He relates,

relates *, that this Monarch, at his appointment to the embassy of Poland, in 1752, had caused to be transmitted to him by the late Prince of Conti, an order written in his Majesty's own hand, to correspond secretly with him, and to prefer the orders he should convey to him through the means of this Prince, to those which should come directly to him from his Council. He added, that in 1757, when his Highness had lost the good graces of Lewis XV. the King intrusted him directly with this confidence, and continued it till his death. This dissimulation went so far as to punish this Nobleman twice, while he gave him a secret testimony, that these two exiles were unmerited; the writing to this effect, the Count has produced at this day. In the affair of the Bastille, he particularly required † that Count Broglio, inculpated, should suffer without justifying himself or without complaining—his liberty to be infringed—and his honour to be called in question; that he should allow the heaviest accusations to be accumulated against him, and should let himself be announced to his country, and to foreign Courts, as a political incendiary, and a contriver of abominable intrigues and practices.

We know not at what time the secret intimacy between the late King and the Duke d'Aiguillon was formed: but it is certain, that it increased, and began to be made public precisely at the time when that Commandant was becoming more odious

* In a memorial produced in Court, and printed in 1779, which is intitled: *Exposé des motifs qui ont nécessité le plainte du Comte de Broglio.*

† In 1773, we shall mention this anecdote again.

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in Britany — that, when he was obliged to recall him, to satisfy the nation, he drew him nearer to his person, by choosing him Commandant of the Light Horse of his guard—in a word, that while he solemnly acknowledged the innocence of M. de la Chalotais basely calumniated, he in a manner concealed his calumniator, at the same time, in his own palace, and persisted in screening him from all the pursuits of justice.

After such striking examples of the manner in which Lewis XV. distinguished in his own mind the individual from the Chief of the State, it cannot be surprising that he also separated his interest from that of the nation. He had a private chest of his own, totally distinct from the public chest, the disposal and management of which he left to the Comptroller General; and he had chosen for his private chest, a man in whom he could confide, a Minister for the purpose: this was M. Bertin. Not only he would not have suffered that any thing should have been taken out of his stock for the public Exchequer, but even when he could increase his, at the expence of the latter, he considered it as a fortunate speculation. He collected all kinds of bills, and no sooner had he raised the credit of some of them in the Council, than he gave orders immediately to his agent, to expose the bills of this class to market before the value of them could be lowered. When the King of Sweden, at that time Prince Royal, came to France to settle the affairs of the subsidies due to his father, the Royal treasure being drained, Lewis XV. shewed great reluctance to advance that sum out of his
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own funds, and did it only upon condition, that it should soon be returned to him.

What was at first nothing more than a laughable childishness, at the period of the life of Lewis XV. we have now reached, was converted into an incredible hardness of heart. The corrupt men who were about him, stimulating his cupidity, seduced him with speculations of an immense profit upon the monopoly of the corn, which they might the more readily exercise under his Majesty, as the pretended system of liberty was the more favourable to this design. They persuaded him to erect magazines for the King, under pretence of supplying the wants of the people; which producing a scarcity of the commodity, kept it up continually at a high price, that was still inanced by unfavourable harvests. We shall not enter into a detail of the manoeuvres practised by the subaltern agents, which are set forth very clearly in a multitude of writings of the Oeconomists. We shall only observe, that Lewis XV. was so seriously engaged in this speculation, that the persons admitted into his private closet saw upon his desk, every day, exact averages of the price of corn in the several markets of the kingdom. This is the reason why the Courts, apparently authorised to trace abuses to their source, were stopped as soon as they were able to discover the thread of them, and especially when they wanted to proceed against the authors. This is the circumstance which rendered useless the famous assembly of principal persons holden at Paris in 1768, under the name of *General Assembly of Police*; which might have become of great importance,

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1769. ance, if the Parliament had had any vigour, or if their President had not been intirely sold to the Court. We see by the account which the President Choart, of the Court of Aids, gave, when he came out of the Cónvocation, to consider of the step proper to be taken, under favour of the King, respecting the excessive dearnefs of corn and bread, that he is obliged to confess his having fulfilled his commission but imperfectly. He informs us, that the object of the Convocation and the deliberation was known only a few moments before the meeting, although matters of the highest consequence were to be discussed; that he could never obtain that the meeting should be postponed to another day, nor that sufficient procrastination should be allowed him to take and to communicate the sense of his Company. He concluded with signifying to his brethren his regret, at having been forced too speedily to determine upon objects so worthy of more mature reflections, in an unexpected meeting, and several of the members of which, were probably in the same case as he was †. It follows, that this Assembly was a real mockery, a bait to deceive the people, and to persuade them, that the King was attentive to their misfortunes, while, in fact, he contributed to them. In a word, the curious still preserve with care the *Royal Almanac* of 1774, in which they had the impudence to place among the officers of finance intrusted with the Royal revenues, the *Sieur Mirlavaud, Treasurer of the corn for the account of his Majesty.*

† See *Memoires pour servir à l'histoire du droit public de la France en matiere d'Impôts.*

It has been said, that towards the end of his reign, Lewis XV. overburthened with the troubles and misfortunes of his kingdom, had entertained some thoughts of abdicating. Though incapable of exercising his authority, yet he was at the same time too jealous of his right, to resign it to any other person. Undoubtedly, if in transferring the whole weight of government upon his successor, he could have preserved all the honour of it, or all that could have contributed to his security, and to his personal enjoyments, he would have readily done it. But, from what we have related, it is evident, that he had in reality abdicated a long time past, in what concerned his people, and even his family, as being foreign to him in every particular which he imagined ought to be the charge of the State. Besides what we have been reading, we shall select, from among many others, one stroke which will complete the picture of the systematic apathy of Lewis XV.

The Curate of Saint-Louis of Versailles, the parish of the Castle, came one day to his levee, according to the privilege he had of doing so. His Majesty, always externally humane, informed himself of the situation of the Pastor's flock, and asked, *if there were a great many sick, dead, or poor?* At this last question, the Curate, fetching a deep sigh, answered, *that there were many.*—But, replied the King, with earnestness, *Are not the alms plentiful? Are they not sufficient? Is the number of unfortunate people increased?*—Oh yes, Sire.—How can this be? exclaimed the Monarch—*from whence come they?*—The reason is, Sire, *that even the footmen of your palace ask charity of me.*—I believe so too, answered the King.

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King, with ill temper, *they won't pay them.* He immediately broke the conversation, and turned upon his heel, as being sorry to be informed of evils which he could not redress. Any one who, without knowing the matter in question, should have hear'd the answer, would have thought that the King was speaking of the people of the Grand Signior, or of the Emperor of China.

To this pitch of insensibility the King of Denmark found him arrived, when he came to Paris. The first interview between these two Monarchs was at Fontainebleau. The King was just returned from hunting; he made his brother wait a quarter of an hour while he was dressing, for which he apologized by saying, that at his time of life, a little attention to the toilet was necessary. He at first deceived this Prince, by an answer which unfortunately came only from his lips. The stranger, after having paid his visit to the children of France, and to the Princesses, when he returned to the Monarch, expressed his satisfaction at the august persons he had been seeing, and congratulated him upon being so well surrounded. This gave an opportunity to Lewis XV. to call to mind the losses he had recently sustained; and his Danish Majesty observing upon this, that the numerous family he had remaining, was a very precious indemnity; the King replied with a sigh; *I have one infinitely more numerous, whose happiness would be truly mine.* An expression of sensibility which raised an emotion in the yet unexperienced heart of the young Monarch; but the frivolousness of which he soon discovered, when, upon the roads, he saw his coach surrounded with the country people begging for bread; when

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he received petitions, in which he was intreated to acquaint his Majesty with the melancholy situation of his kingdom; in a word, when he was informed, that similar scenes were often renewed about the coach of Lewis XV. and always with as little effect.

At the supper which was given that evening between the two Kings and the Courtiers, it was agreed, that all the wit and all the fallies came from the stranger. Speaking of the disproportion of ages between them, Lewis XV. said to him, *I might be your grandfather. That circumstance is wanting to my happiness,* replied his Danish Majesty, with cordiality.

Another answer, not less ingenious, was the one he gave also to the King, who, observing that he was much pleased with Madame de Flavacourt, by whom he was seated, said to him, with apparent malignity—which, however, was as distant from his character as the opposite motive—*Would you think that the amiable lady you are conversing with is above fifty?—It is a proof, Sire, that one does not grow old at your Court.*

In proof of our assertion, that Lewis XV. when he said bitter things, had them no more in his heart, than the obliging things he used to utter—a circumstance which constitutes another singularity in his disposition—we cannot omit the anecdote of the Abbé Broglio, one of the most convincing we could possibly adduce.

One day, at the public dinner, the King having inquired after one of the persons who used to eat at the table, was told that he was dead; *I had taken care to warn him of it,* said he. Then,

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1769. looking round the circle of Courtiers who were about him, and fixing this Abbé, he addressed him in the following words: *Your turn will come next.* This Nobleman, being of a morose, harsh, and choleric disposition, was scarce able to contain himself; and replied: *Sire, Your Majesty went yesterday a hunting, a storm came on, and you was wet as well as the rest:* he then went out, transported with rage. *This is just the temper of the Abbé de Broglie,* cried the King, *he is always angry:*—but nothing more was said of the matter.

If Lewis XV. did not, however, pique himself on shewing to his Danish Majesty, in conversation, the same amiable turn which he seemed to reserve more particularly for his intimates; if on the throne he did not display before him the truly regal qualities of administration; yet he received his guest with a degree of magnificence worthy of himself and of his situation. The Duke of Duras, first Gentleman of the bed-chamber, was commissioned to accompany the foreign Prince every where. He loaded him with rich presents; caused all the Princes of the blood to entertain him successively; and the festivals occasioned by his arrival, removed in some measure the gloom and tedium of the Court. But, in reality, the King was very desirous of getting rid of this troublesome spectator, in order to give himself up freely to a new passion he had conceived, and the turpitude of which being sensible of, he did not dare avow the object of it to him.

Since the death of the Marchioness, and the disgrace of Mademoiselle Romans, Lewis XV. had had no acknowledged mistress, nor even any one that was known. They were continually new objects, either
women

women of the Court, or tradesmen's wives, or girls of mean birth; they were chosen for him in the several orders of the State, for his insatiable appetite found every thing agreeable, though he soon grew disgusted. It was the business of those vicious men who had plunged him again into debauchery, from which he had had a momentary inclination to withdraw, to procure for him incessantly the gratification of his passions. Among these was the *Sieur Le Bel*, first valet de chambre to his Majesty, who was particularly commissioned to make discoveries. One day, when he was upon the search, he met with a certain Count Dubarri, who was engaged in a similar employment for several Noblemen of the Court, and signified his embarrassment to him. "Is that all?" replied the Count; "you need search no further, I can suit you with a morsel truly fit for a King; you shall go and see her." He carried his friend home, and shewed him a *demoiselle* named *L'Ange*, formerly his own mistress, and whom he now let out to others. He assured the *Sieur Le Bel*, from experience, that when the Monarch had once been acquainted with her, he would stick to her for a long time. The girl proved so agreeable to the modern *Bonneau*, that he agreed to introduce her to the King's bed. We shall not dive any further into the dark mysteries of this interview; and shall only observe, that his Majesty was so enraptured with her, that he expressed his satisfaction to the Duke de Noailles. This Courtier answered with a degree of frankness, which, while it classed the girl among common prostitutes, ought to have opened the eyes of his master, if he had been susceptible of subduing this unworthy attachment.

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ment. The magic was too powerful, and he could not sever himself from this abandoned woman: it became necessary to conduct her secretly to Compiègne, and also to Fontainebleau; and, the excess of his ardour blinding him still more and more, he would have her married, that she might have a name, and become capable of being presented. Count Dubarri had a brother very fit for this purpose, and Mademoiselle L'Ange was no longer known but by the name of the Countess Dubarri. We shall not detain ourselves to discuss whom she was, what was her origin, or whether she were a bastard or legitimate: all these particulars seem to be sufficiently cleared up in the *Anecdotes** published of this Beauty. Let it suffice to say, that, born in a very obscure station, and devoted to libertinism from her earliest youth, as much from taste as from situation, she could bring nothing to her august lover, notwithstanding the flower of her youth, and the brilliancy of her charms, but the refuse of the vilest wretches, and the dregs of prostitution;—that it was scarce possible he should be ignorant of it;—and that he carried his low debauchery and profligacy so far as to bring her into his family, to force his children to see her, almost to seat her upon the throne with himself, to lavish the public treasure to enable her to display the luxury of a Queen, to multiply the taxes in order to satisfy her childish fancies, and to make the destiny of his subjects depend upon the caprices of this extravagant girl.

* See *Anecdotes of the Countess Dubarri*.

The elevation of Madame Dubarri did not, however, take place, without occasioning many disturbances at Court; but contradiction served only to render the passion of Lewis XV. more stubborn. It is, perhaps, the only occasion, in which, bearing up against all difficulties, he shewed a degree of firmness and perseverance, which failed him in matters of the utmost importance.

The first difficulty arose from a woman, jealous, not of the King's heart, but of his sceptre, which she wished to partake. This was the Dutchesse de Grammont, sister to the Duke de Choiseul. Haughty, imperious, and, greedy of power to excess, she had already subdued her brother so far, that this Minister, so proud, and so absolute, suffered himself to be governed by her at pleasure. The malignity of the Courtiers, not knowing to what such a singular ascendant could be attributed, had induced them to account for it by supposing a more than fraternal intimacy subsisting between these two persons; who, in fact, were each of them too much incapable of restraint from motives of religion or public decency. However this may be, the anecdote obtained much credit at Court, where every enormity is believed, because the Courtiers feel themselves capable of every enormity.

The Dutchesse of Grammont, in concert undoubtedly with her brother, the more firmly to consolidate and perpetuate the power in their family, had conceived the idea of becoming mistress to the King. Though she was neither young nor handsome, yet the knowledge they both had of former events, and of the character of this Prince, intitled them to hope for the success of the project. The example

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of Madame de Mailly—who, with no greater share of beauty or of youth, had nevertheless succeeded, by means of her boldness and impudence—was a powerful encouragement, and the Dutchess already looked upon herself as triumphant, when she was supplanted by this new-comer. She became the more furious, as she was soon informed what kind of a woman had been preferred to her. She insinuated her rage into the heart of her brother, whose high-minded disposition made him naturally averse to the advances of this party; for the Dubarri's not daring at first to strive against this all-powerful Minister, had endeavoured to conciliate his favour. It is even affirmed, that the Countess made some advances to him, which he might have improved if he had pleased. The haughtiness with which he behaved towards them—the incredible progress of the favourite in the Monarch's affections—and the rivals of the Choiseuls, who ranged themselves on their side—drove them to an open war, which was to terminate in a disgrace, from which the Duke, lulled by a prosperity of ten years continuance, thought himself far distant. It was therefore less from any apprehension of this kind, than to gratify his sister's resentment, that he resolved to open the eyes of his master upon the infamy which his choice would reflect upon him: he did not, however, do this in a direct manner, being too well aware of the danger, but indirectly, and by the most oblique means. He first set his emissaries at work to find out the scandalous chronicle of the adventures of the Countess; he had them preserved in ballads, in manuscript novels, and in little stories, with which the polite circles were amused. The police, at his disposal,

disposal, far from officiously casting a veil upon the meanness of the Monarch, contributed first to divulge it, in those songs with which they amuse the populace of the capital at the *Pont-Neuf* *; allegorical songs, indeed, but the key of which is soon obtained. The Court were informed of them, and the history of the *Bourbonnoise* † reached the ears of the Princesses Royal which occasioned them to make many difficulties with respect to her being presented. Lewis XV. who was very sensible of his folly, would not make it more conspicuous by precipitating the event before he had prepared the minds of the Royal Family. It became therefore a long negotiation, which held the Court in suspense during some months, and gave occasion to wagers on both sides of the question. The Choiseuls were urging the Princesses underhand to keep firm; and at the same time redoubled their efforts to prevail upon his Majesty, to undeceive him, and to make him ashamed of his choice. It is said even, that the *Sieur Lie Bel*, considering the consequences that might follow from the imposition he had practised on this occasion towards his master, and fearing his resentment, endeavoured, without success, to prevent it; that, alarmed at the inutility of the step he had taken—from which he foreboded a better issue—in his despair he perished suddenly in an unfortunate manner, either by a constrained or voluntary death.

However this may be, the agents employed, under the auspices of their august father, could not pre-

* From whence these songs go by the name of *Pont-neufs* in French.

† The name given to Madame Dubarri in the songs.

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vail upon the Princesses Royal any other way than by exciting their fears with respect to his health, which was represented to be impaired by the affliction he experienced from their opposition. They yielded to this irresistible motive; and the next difficulty was to find a woman who would take the ceremony upon her. There was a necessity of seeking out a Madame Le Bearn, an old woman, always engaged in law-suits, to whom a hundred thousand livres * were given for her trouble, and to keep company with the newly-presented lady in the beginning, when no other person would appear with her. The allurements of favour soon brought a Court about her. The King supped every night with his mistress; she used to invite, and, in order that the Great should not be able to refuse, she added at the bottom of the invitation, *His Majesty will honour me with his presence*. Some Ladies imperceptibly gave way; the Countess de l'Hopital, Madame de Valentinois, and the Lady of Marshal Mirepoix, set the example; and the Count de la Marche was observed to increase the croud of her admirers. The Prince of Condé having obtained from the King the favour of entertaining him at Chantilly, expressed his gratitude to his Majesty by receiving the Countess there.

The Duke de Choiseul began to perceive, that he had not behaved with sufficient policy towards the favourite; but, too much biassed by the resentment of his sister, he had proceeded to such lengths that he could not retract. He met the dangers of

* Upwards of four thousand pounds.

the storm that was preparing, and, considering it with firmness, he was resolved to make head against it. He saw his party diminished, and the creatures whom he thought most attached to him, combining against him. Among these, the first person who abandoned him, was the one whom he had lain under the greatest obligations, and who to appearance was most inviolably devoted to him. It was the real Chancellor; for at this time there were three of them in France. His ruling character was deceit, which he made wonderfully subservient to the gratification of his ambition. His fraudulent artifices practised for the Prime Minister, had obtained singular favour from him. His dexterity in managing his Company at pleasure, in exciting or diminishing their activity, as the Duke wished, induced this Minister to think, that he would still be more useful to him at the head of the Magistracy, from whence he was desirous of removing M. Bertin, who, from the particular confidence with which the Monarch honoured him, had a claim upon that dignity, and was not suitable to him on account of his known attachment to the Jesuits. Accordingly, he began a negotiation with M. de Blancmesnil, and employed M. de Maleherbes, the son of this old man, not less a dupe than the Duke de Choiseul. Such was the adroitness of M. de Maupeou, that he turned to the advancement of his fortune the circumstance that ought to have overthrown it. As First President, it was his business to reckon up the votes. In one of the meetings he was accused of having abused his post to carry on an imposition, and make the opinion pass which was most agreeable to the Court, though supported by

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by a less number of suffrages. Fortunately for him, it was near the time of the vacations; the reprimanding of him was deferred to Martinmas-day, and he availed himself of this delay, and intrigued with so much artifice, that the Chancellor gave in his resignation in favour of the Vice-Chancellor; who, according to agreement, satisfied with this instant of real and peaceable enjoyment of this dignity, resigned the next day to his son.

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The members of the Parliament, who were well acquainted with thisameleon, foretold to the Duke de Choiseul, that he had taken his most dangerous enemy into the Ministry. He did not entirely throw off the mask in the first instance. Still uncertain of the turn which the favour of the Dubarris might take, he kept upon good terms with both parties. But when the presenting of the Countess had consolidated her party, he went over entirely to them; and carried the refinement of his adulation so far as to find out that he was related to the Countess, whom he always called his *Cousin*. The suppleness of his character made him submit to all the extravagances of this woman, who had neither decency nor understanding. In order to make himself agreeable to her, he derogated from the dignity of his post, and allowed himself to become her sport, and that of her negro, and there was no kind of metamorphosis he did not undergo in this design, which he never lost sight of for a single moment. Notwithstanding all this meanness and servility, he never could obtain any thing more than a subaltern confidence in this Court, in which he had been forestalled by a Nobleman more amiable, not less full of wit, not less subtle, and in every respect better calculated

to succeed with the women. It is evident that we have been speaking of the Duke d'Aiguillon; who, by this channel, extricated himself from a very disagreeable situation, into which M. de Maupeou had thrown him, under pretence of doing him service, and perhaps with the real design of ruining him even at that time, and of supplanting this competitor, whose credit eclipsed his own. It is, however, to be presumed, that he was sincere upon this occasion, because even his interest engaged him to league himself with this enemy of the Choiseuls; whom he had no sooner abandoned, than he was sensible of the necessity of overthrowing them.

While Lewis XV.—by that spirit of inconsistency maintained during his whole life, but still more prevalent at the end of his reign, from his becoming more weak—was punishing with exile the Attornies General of the Parliament of Britany, whom he had declared innocent, he was bestowing more conspicuous marks of favour upon the Duke d'Aiguillon, from whom he had not been able to avoid taking away the government of the province, upon the account given him by the President Ogier of the vexations he had exercised there, and of the general execration he was holden in. It was to the new favourite, undoubtedly, that the Duke owed his being approved of to command the light horse of his Majesty's guard; which contributed only the more to irritate the people of Britany, and to inspire the Magistrates with greater activity to prosecute him. The affair had taken another turn. The Parliament of Rennes, under pretence of the troubles occasioned in their district by the *formerly self-entitled* Jesuits—who had taken advantage of their dispersion, and of the encouragement

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encouragement they met with, to take refuge there in multitudes, to assemble there, to hold secret conventicles, to intrigue, and to make it the center and the repository of their plans of revenge—had ordered the public ministry to watch over them; from whence resulted an immense train of proceedings, carried on in all the cities of the province, and a terrible decree, which ordered them to evacuate it, unless they would take the oath required. During the course of the proceedings, it had been found that the Duke d'Aiguillon was supposed to have solicited, by himself and by subaltern agents, witnesses to depose against the accused Magistrates. Indications were discovered, in the depositions, of unheard of oppression—of an enormous abuse of power—*of the most atrocious crime*; an expression used in the letter from the Parliament of Britany to the Chancellor, under which they disguised the suspicion of the premeditated poisoning of the Attornies General. The Parliament, upon the knowledge of this circumstance, could not avoid ordering a fresh inquiry; this was continued—great numbers of witnesses were hear'd, and others pointed out—the Public Ministry was commissioned to move the Court—and, at the instant when the cause was going to be submitted to the impartial examination of the natural judges, a decree of Council, notified in the most illegal manner, forbad the Public Ministry, the Commissioners of the Parliament, and even the Parliament itself, to go through with the cause, and to pronounce a judgment. This was still the result of the influence of the Duke d'Aiguillon with the favourite, who had required this compliance of the Chancellor. But this was the subject of new complaints,

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plaints, and of fresh remonstrances, and the affair, which Lewis XV. flattered himself would be quieted, rose up again with other accessories, which rendering it more complicated, could not but give it a greater degree of eclat, especially by the art that had been used to introduce in it a Duke and Peer as a culprit, which must necessarily excite commotions in the Parliament of Paris, as being a Court of Peers.

During these transactions, the intermedial Committee of the States of Britany, which still subsisted, in the interval of their sessions, thought it incumbent upon them not to remain alone silent upon the affair of Mess. de la Chalotais, and addressed, in form of a memorial, such vigorous remonstrances to his Majesty, that they left no room to doubt of the agitation the States would be in this year. The circumstance chiefly insisted upon in this memorial, was the incredible contradiction between the speeches and the conduct of the King towards them. "We cannot," it was said, "conceal from your Majesty the universal desolation occasioned by your answer. Even the testimony, so glorious to the Attornies General, and so satisfactory to us, which you give of their innocence, becomes a cause of terror to all your citizens. What, Sire, they are innocent, and you punish them!—We have not been able to see without surprize, mixed with consternation, private facts and particular dissatisfactions assigned as motives for a public punishment. Every magistrate, every citizen, every man who is punished, must be pronounced guilty, and he cannot be pronounced so, without allowing him the privilege of defending himself. If he be accused, it must be known by whom, and

" for

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" have been convicted.

" Our honour, our life, and our liberty, belong to
" us, as your Crown belongs to you. We would
" spill our blood to preserve your rights to you, but
" do you preserve ours. Mere privileges are not here
" the point in question.——It is in plain natural
" right, that we at present find what is the object of
" our remonstrances.

" Even God, of whom you are the living image,
" cannot punish the innocent, and the guilty man
" whom he chastises cannot doubt of his crime. Yes,
" the declaration of innocence, and the infliction of
" a punishment at the same time, are impossible even
" to the Almighty, and it would be blasphemy to
" attribute to him so odious a contradiction.

" We can never conceive, that those whose honour
" is not called in question, and whose nice feelings
" your Majesty condescends, even by repeated decla-
" rations, to set at ease, should not be perfectly inno-
" cent; and still less can we conceive how those,
" whose innocence is perfect, can experience the fate
" reserved to guilt and to real criminals.

" What are plain citizens to expect, if the first
" magistrates are not sheltered from so fatal an op-
" pression? The province, Sire, prostrate at your
" feet, implores your justice. There is no longer
" any justice, if we can be carried away from our
" houses, thrown into captivity, or retained in end-
" less exile, under pretence of secret offences, founded
" upon obscure accusations, against which we cannot
" defend ourselves, and which will only be made
" known to us by the rigour of the punishment.

" Condescend, Sire, to recall to mind the long
" series

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" series of calamities which those, whose innocence
 " you acknowledge and attest, have experienced.
 " They have been torn from their functions, and
 " from their families; they have been dragged as vile
 " culprits from one prison to another; they have been
 " announced to all the kingdom of France as preva-
 " ricators and traitors; they have been exposed to
 " the horror of a criminal process, the violence of
 " which was equal to it's injustice; they have beheld
 " the preparations for their capital punishment; and
 " they have only escaped an ignominious death (if
 " virtue could stand in fear of ignominy) to remain in
 " a long exile, the period of which is not fixed.—
 " The accusation, pursued with so much virulence, is
 " abandoned, but the vengeance still subsists. Facts
 " and dissatisfactions which are not mentioned, in
 " order that nothing may be proved, are substituted
 " to an action acknowledged calumnious, and op-
 " pression without a law-suit is adopted instead of
 " an oppressive law-suit."

If we would make our readers acquainted with all
 the beauties of this elegant composition, we should
 transcribe the whole of it. It's eloquence has this
 peculiarity in it, that antithesis—which is often a
 childish figure of rhetoric, especially when too much
 repeated in a discourse—though it occur frequently
 in this memorial, contributes only to give it more
 force and energy; because it is founded on concise,
 close, convincing, and clear reasoning; and because
 it is the natural and true representation of the per-
 petual conduct of the Court in the trial in question.

The Ministers were so fearful of the effect which
 the perusal of this memorial would have upon the
 King—who had too much understanding not to be
 convinced

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convinced of the tyrannical part, and, which would hurt his vanity still more, let us be allowed to say it, the foolish part, he had been made to act for five years past—that they did not think proper to mention it to him. They sent back these remonstrances to the Commissioners, making a merit with them of suppressing them, under pretence that they would certainly have provoked the indignation of his Majesty. The authors of them thought differently; and copies of their memorial soon transpired. It was received with the warmest approbation by the public; it was considered as a masterpiece upon public right, comprehending in general all the principles which constitute the real monarchical state; principles which had been for some time so much departed from, that many persons considered them as problematical. The patriots were delighted to see them brought again before the eyes of the nation; they eagerly sought after this work, transcribed it, and distributed a multitude of copies of it.

In the embarrassment the Council were in to extricate themselves from the tempestuous situation in which they were more than ever plunged, the idea was suggested of negotiating with M. de la Chaboissais, of tempting him by the most seducing offers, and prevailing upon him to desist. This expedient was looked upon as the only one capable of quieting the affair, of extinguishing and of effacing the slightest vestige of it. There was at Paris a Breton, member of the French Academy, much connected with the Attornies General, very warm in their interests, but endowed with little subtlety, a great talker, blunt, and confused; all qualities incompatible with those of a negotiator. Nevertheless, the difficulty

culty of finding another determined the choice of him. His name was Duclos. He was sent with a verbal commission only, as a man of no consequence, and who might be disavowed in case of a refusal, which, from the known character of M. de la Chalotais, was unavoidable. Being apprized of the arrival of this secret agent, he asked him, in the first instant, if he came to Xaintes as his friend or as his seducer; if in the first capacity, he should be well received, and might stay; if in the second, he had nothing to do but to depart, which he did. His message was not long. Recourse was obliged to be had to some other expedient. The matter became very pressing, as his Majesty began to be tired, and, the more circumstances were disguised from him, the more was it necessary to conceal the whole from him. The Chancellor, who was sensible of how great importance it was to him to signalize his promotion to the head of the Magistracy by some imposing act, that might procure him the intire confidence of his master, assured him that he knew of no other method than to suffer the affair to take it's free course, to lay it before the Court of Peers, and to exculpate the Duke d'Aiguillon by a solemn decree. He took this step, either because he had not in reality seen any thing in the process sent by the Parliament of Britany which could seriously inculpate this Commandant—because he had not sufficiently attended to it—because he was glad of an opportunity of rendering himself necessary to the Duke, in proportion as he should be involved—or, in a word, which is most probable, because he flattered himself, that his influence would be more effectually exerted in the Court of Peers, the several members of which he was acquainted with, than in a

1769. strange and distant Parliament. But, indeed, who could bring to view all the secret recesses of a heart so replete with falsehood? The Parliament of Britany, apprized of the letters patent, under express reservations, and which were necessary in order that this step should not prejudice their existence, had of their own accord sent the whole proceeding to the Parliament of Paris. They thus avoided the conflict which might have ensued, and prevented the contest, which would infallibly have arisen between the two Courts, from making them lose sight of the matter to attend to the form, and by this dextrous manœuvre they obliged, in some sort, the Court of Peers to interfere. In the perplexity occasioned by the new turn which the affair was taking, the first opinion must necessarily be, to let themselves go to circumstances, and to gain time for any further resolutions which these might suggest. This had determined the appeal. The King, reserving to himself by this the liberty of suspending the affair, or of putting a stop to it whenever he might think proper, it was agreed upon that his Majesty himself should assist at the sittings, which would contribute to moderate the intemperance of them, and that they should be holden at Versailles, in order more effectually to restrain the too great impetuosity of the Magistrates.

Respecting the first article, the Parliament determined, that they had no need of letters patent to take cognizance of a matter in which a Peer was concerned, and to bring him to trial, their Court being the sole, only, and essential tribunal, to which such a trial by right belonged. With regard to the second article, the reference of the matter to them, they were too much flattered with it to oppose themselves

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themselves to this act of Royalty. They only entered a resolution, which charged the First President to represent the irregularity of the removal of the cause, as much in itself, as from the inconveniences that might result from it. Some Peers having been desirous of reviving an antient claim, always rejected, of forming, and, without the concurrence of the Civilians, by themselves, and with the King only at their head, the Court of Peers; this claim was again annihilated; it was proved to them, that the Magistrates of this day were no more to be compared to those that were formerly named *Légistes*, or persons intrusted with the civil authority, than the present Peers were to be compared to the antient Peers of the kingdom; that the present Peers were only so many Gentlemen, appointed by his Majesty to a superior dignity, and were nothing in themselves; and that they could not therefore assimilate themselves to those great vassals of the Crown, who were so many Sovereigns; and without whose concurrence the Monarch could do nothing. The Prince of Conti, a zealous Parliamentary, insisted much upon this point, and agreed to the infinite distinction there ought to be between the Princes and the Peers; he spoke of the system of the latter, and threw a kind of ridicule upon it, but he agreed, that this system being of recent date, was fortunately not adopted by the majority.

The first sitting of the Court of Peers at Versailles, took place on the 4th of April. The King entered alone with the Princes: all his guard retired, and the officers of the Court took possession of the doors.

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The Chancellor, beaming with glory, opened the Assembly by a discourse very well adapted to his purpose. He announced, on the part of the King, that the intention of his Majesty was, that there should be an absolute liberty of suffrages and opinions, and that the affair should be tried with the utmost severity, to acquit or condemn the accused.

The First President answered by another speech, in which he introduced the representations he was commissioned to make.

The informations taken by the Parliament of Britany were afterwards read. It was ordered, that they should be deposited in the office, and that the Attorney General should take an account of them, to give in his opinion, the whole without prejudice to the respective rights of the Court of Peers, and of all those who sit in it, and without giving a sanction to infer that any other Court should be authorized to continue any informations or proceedings, in which a Peer should be named.

It was resolved at the conclusion, that most humble thanks should be presented to the King, for having condescended, that the real and antient principles of the Peerage should be again consecrated and preserved, in his presence, and with his solemn approbation.

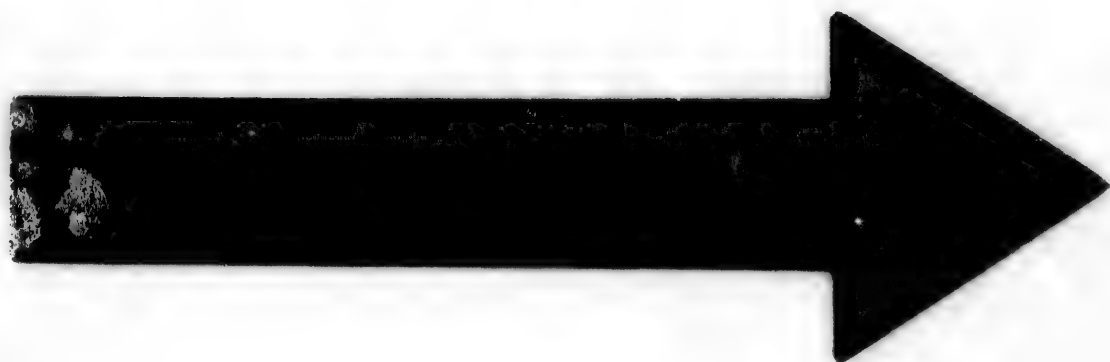
The King appeared to pay very great attention to all the informations read by the First President; and, as this long reading fatigued the Magistrate, whose voice was insensibly lost, it was observed, that his Majesty bent forwards to hear the better, and not to lose any part of what was said.

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The Parliament returned, very well satisfied with the sitting, in which they had acquired a new eclat by the authentic confirmation granted to them by the Sovereign, both of their being essentially necessary in forming, together with the Peerage, the Court of Peers, as also of their being the sole Court of Peers, in exclusion to all the other Parliaments. Some of the Members were particularly delighted with having been noticed by the Monarch, among others, M. Pasquier, the famous Recorder of the cause of Damiens, and of Count Lally, whom the Chancellor pointed out by a gest to the King, who was desirous of considering him more attentively, as he passed before his Majesty. The second sitting, on the 7th of April, was not less agreeable to the Parliament. The Attorney General produced in it a complaint against the Duke d'Aiguillon, and a person named Andouard, Major of the militia of Nantz, who, in this affair, appeared to be the Agent of the Duke. Accordingly, all the proceedings carried on in Britany were annulled, as being illegally instituted, inasmuch as they concerned a Peer. Fresh inquiries, and fresh informations, &c. were ordered to be made.

During the course of the inquiries, M. Michau de Montblin distinguished himself by his eloquence, to such a degree, that the King declared himself to be of his opinion, expressing, nevertheless, his dislike to monitories, which were commonly used in all proceedings. But from deference to his Majesty, all the members unanimously returned to his opinion, which was considered as an order, and it may from thence be inferred what kind of liberty reigned in that Assembly.



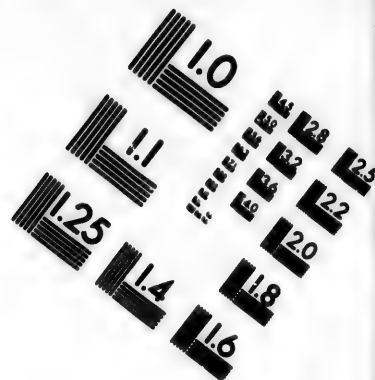
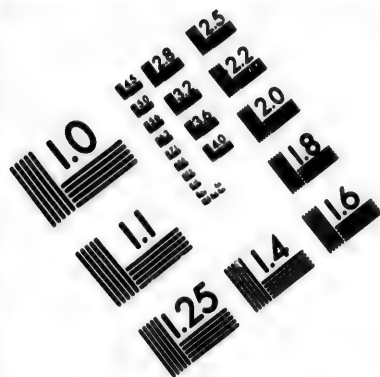
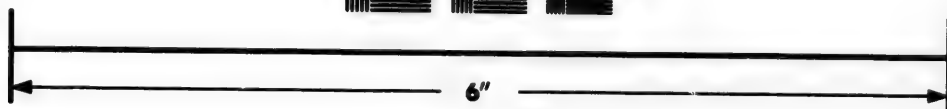
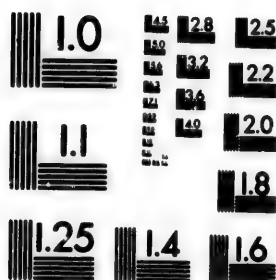


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However this may be, every thing proceeded so far with general satisfaction, and his Majesty seemed so well pleased to preside over his Court of Peers, that he gave orders to construct immediately, on the spot of the antient theatre, a Grand Chamber, a Tribunal, a Council Chamber, houses of refreshment, and, in a word, all the conveniences necessary to form a Court of Judicature. The two last sittings had been in the Queen's anti-chamber, in which the Beds of Justice were holden; which in fact was rather improper. Unfortunately, the King was soon tired of this transitory caprice, which was first interrupted by the marriage of the Dauphin, and the festivals given on that occasion.

This was undoubtedly in itself one of the most important events of this reign, as much from it's strengthening our alliance with the House of Austria, as from the circumstances which accompanied and succeeded it. It was brought about by the care of the Duke de Choiseul, who, in all probability, having his own grandeur, as much as the happiness of France, in view, removed all difficulties, and fortunately concluded these nuptials, which were completed most opportunely for him, who, having disdained to maintain himself by little intrigues, would now be supported by the Dauphiness herself. It was not imagined, that he would have kept his ground till that period; but when it arrived, his friends conceived better hopes, especially on seeing the distinguished part he acted on that occasion. The King gave him leave to go to Compiègne to meet that Princess, and to be the first Minister who paid his homage to her. The Dauphiness received him with singular attention, and

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and granted him a private audience, wherein, after having expressed to him the great desire she had of seeing him, she thanked him for the care he had taken to contribute to her happiness; and added, that she depended upon the continuation of it, to assist her youth and inexperience, by his advice.

It was scarce possible that the preparations, the pomp, and the rejoicings, on account of the marriage of the heir apparent to the Crown, should not occasion a great deal of expence, notwithstanding the distressed situation of the kingdom; but this became excessive, under a prodigal Sovereign, who had no thought but for himself, who suffered all matters to be carried on as his Ministers chose, and who would not see the depredations to which those extraordinary charges opened an immense field. To give some idea of them, it was calculated that thirty thousand horses must be employed in the journey. It was said, that a multitude of upholsterers were to go post from town to town, to ornament the several places where the Princess was to make any stay; and that sixty carriages, all new, were to make part of the train that was gone to receive her at Strasbourg.

This was only the prelude. Nothing had yet been beheld equal to the dresses of the King and the Princess, which crowds of people went to see at the embroiderer's or taylor's. That of the King was one which was presented to him at the nuptials of the Duke de Chartres, and his Majesty having then asked, whether any thing more beautiful could be contrived, and being answered in the negative, had ordered, that it should be reserv-

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ed for the wedding of his grandson. Six dresses were reckoned of equally refined luxury, and those of the children of France were answerable to them. They were besides to be ornamented with a quantity of jewels. The state coaches were no less an object of curiosity: the richness of them was equal to their elegance, which will not create surprize, when we are told that they were commanded by the Duke de Choiseul.

With regard to the public spectacles, the festivals of Lewis XIV. so celebrated in Europe, and, in history, could not be compared to this. The flower-pot of the fire-works alone, was to be composed of thirty thousand rockets, which, at a crown * each, formed an object of four thousand louis; and we know that a flower-pot of fire-works goes off in a moment.

The preparations for these prodigalities formed a shocking contrast with the insurrections occasioned by the scarcity of bread, which continued and increased, at the same time, in some provinces. There was a riot at Besançon, and at Tours, and it was carried to such a height in this last town, that the Intendant was obliged to make his escape by a back-door, and the Archbishop thought it incumbent upon him to come into Court, to display his pastoral solicitude. In the counties of la Marche, and the Limousin, it was calculated, that upwards of four thousand persons were starved to death, and several more would have perished, had it not been for the humanity of M. de Persan,

* Two shillings and six pence.

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Master of Requests, who, being Lord of part of the manor of the province, sent powerful succours to his tenants.

These misfortunes gave rise to a little pamphlet, intituled: *A singular idea of a good citizen, concerning the public festivals which are intended to be exhibited at Paris, and at Court, upon occasion of the Dauphin's nuptials.* After having enumerated the costs of the entertainments, spectacles, fireworks, illuminations, and balls, carried to the highest degree of magnificence, and the recapitulation of which amounted to a capital of twenty millions †, the author concludes his truly original pamphlet in the following manner.

“I propose that none of these things should be done, but that these twenty millions should be taken off from the imposts of the year, and especially the land-tax. Thus, instead of amusing the idle people of the Court, and of the capital, with vain and momentary diversions, the sorrowful cultivator would be filled with joy; the whole nation would be made to partake of this fortunate event; and to the most remote corners of the kingdom this exclamation would resound: *Long live Lewis the well-beloved*;—a species of festival so new, would reflect more real and more lasting glory on the King, than all the pomp and pageantry of Asiatic entertainments; and history would consecrate this event to posterity with greater satisfaction, than the frivolous details of a magnificence, burthenfome to the people, and very

† Upwards of eight hundred thousand pounds.

1770. "far from contributing to the real grandeur of a
" Monarch, the father of his subjects."

There were too many persons of consequence interested in preventing that idea from succeeding, for any attention to be paid to it. They only endeavoured to prevent that the cries of the unfortunate should reach the throne, and especially the ears of the Princess, whose youthful and unexperienced heart, being sensible and tender, would certainly have been moved by them. It was affected to insert in the Gazette of France*, that there was a quantity of corn at Nantz, which had hitherto been hindered from circulating by the bad weather, the overflowings of the rivers, and other accidental obstacles.

It was under these fatal auspices that the Dauphiness arrived at Compiègne. The King was very desirous of seeing her, and of knowing whether she were handsome. It is said, that when the Prince of Poix came to acquaint him with the news of the arrival of the Archduchess at Strasbourg, M. Bourret, Secretary of the Cabinet, at the same time presented to him the exchange of contract made upon the frontiers. His Majesty, who was very familiar with that servant, asked him what he thought of the Dauphiness, and whether she had a fine bosom; he answered, that the Dauphiness had a charming figure, and very beautiful eyes, &c. "That is not what I talk to you about," replied his Majesty jocosely, "I ask you whether she has a fine bosom?" "Sire, I did not take the liberty to carry my eyes so far," answered the subtle Courtier. "You are a fool,"

* See the Gazette of France, of Monday, 14th May, 1770.

continued

continued his Majesty, laughing, "*it is the first thing
"one looks at in a woman."*

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We may judge, by this little anecdote, of the eagerness with which Lewis XV. examined his daughter-in-law when he saw her. He went as far as the prescribed limits to meet her, where, conforming herself to the ceremonial, she got out of her coach, and threw herself at the feet of his Majesty, who raised her up with kindness, and embraced her. They slept at Compiègne; and the next day, passing through St. Denis, they went to see Madame Louisa, one of the King's daughters, who had lately taken the veil at the Carmelites of that place. The whole city of Paris was assembled upon the road, and there was a double row of coaches from St. Denis to the gate called Maillot. The Royal Family supped at the castle of La Muette, where Lewis XV. was not ashamed himself to present the Countess Dubarri to the Dauphiness, and to make her eat with that Princess.

The Dauphiness had, till that moment, been ignorant of the situation of Madame Dubarri, whom she had often heard mentioned at her Court. One day, impatient of hearing the continual repetition of this name, she asked what was that Lady's employment, who was so much talked of? she was answered, that the Countess amused the King. "*That being the case,*" replied ingenuously the young Archduchess, "*I declare myself her rival.*" She was not tempted to become so at that instant, when she had certainly been better informed; but, attentive to gratify the inclinations of the Monarch, his Majesty having asked her how she found that lady, she answered, *Charming*; which gave the highest

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continued

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est satisfaction to the Royal Lover. It is certain that Madame Dubarri was, at that time, the most remarkable woman at Court, with respect to her artless figure and her natural graces. She might be called beautiful in herself, and, by a singularity still more astonishing, she was also, in outward appearances, the most decent in her behaviour and conversation.

The King, the Dauphin, and the Royal Family returned from Muette to sleep at Versailles; the Dauphiness alone remained there, in compliance with the laws of the Church, not to live under the same roof as her future consort. She did not go to the Castle 'till the next day; after having dressed herself in her robes of ceremony, she went to the chapel to receive the nuptial benediction. The Princess was much admired there; who, in the midst of an unknown set of people, and the natural astonishment occasioned by so many objects, did not appear in the least embarrassed, but went through the ceremonial with great ease, and with peculiar graces.

In the afternoon, an immense number of people were assembled in the gardens, in which were the preparations for the fire-works, and the illuminations that were to be exhibited in the evening. It was a disagreeable thing to observe, that, in the midst of so many preparations for a superb festival, those gardens were in very bad order, and in several places resembled the gardens of a castle, in which an execution has been entered. In the first place, the waters, which are an essential part of the entertainment of such a day, neither played, nor were they in a condition to play; several of the basins were dry;

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dry; even the canal was dirty and full of mud: mutilated statues, scattered upon the ground, announced the having neglected to pick them up, or to conceal their ruins from the public eye. Even all the flights of steps were shockingly damaged:—there were no violins, no dances, no provisions for the people, who did not partake of the mirth, which should be the first mark of a public festival. A few mountebanks only were preparing to exhibit some diversions in the evening. The sky seemed not to be in harmony with the earth, for two dreadful storms dispersed the people whom curiosity had brought there, and prevented them from seeing either fireworks or illuminations, which were postponed to more favourable weather. By another neglect, unworthy of the majesty of the place, the courts, at nine o'clock at night, were not even lighted as much as those of a private man; the galleries and passages remained in profound obscurity; there was not a single lamp either on the fore or the back front of the palace. The town of Versailles did not seem to participate the least in this great event, and Paris was reproached with having conducted matters with the greatest parsimony. The poor were seen with indignation begging upon this day, as usual, and there were neither sausages, bread, nor wine, provided for them. The Noblemen did not distinguish themselves more, and the magnificent palace of the Minister of Paris, the Count de St. Florentin, was only lighted by two rows of small lamps, at no great height from the ground.

As for the rest, all the persons who entered the apartments on the day of the marriage, and especially those who assisted at the royal banquet, agreed, that they

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they had never seen so miraculous a sight; they pretended, that all the descriptions they could make of it, would be short of the truth; and that those which we read in the Tales of the Fairies, could only give an imperfect idea of it. The richness and luxuriant fancy of the dresses, the blaze of the diamonds, and the magnificence of the apartments, dazzled the eyes of the spectators, and prevented them from fixing their attention to particulars. The Dauphiness was the person who attracted the most earnest notice of every one, on whom all eyes were fixed, and, when withdrawn through respect, were incessantly returning. The following is the picture that was given of her at the time:—"The Princess, who is tall for her age, is thin, without being meagre, and as a young person should be, who is not thoroughly formed. She is very well made, and her limbs well proportioned. Her hair is of a beautiful light colour, which it is thought will, in time, be turned to a bright chestnut, and is extremely well set. Majesty already appears in her countenance; the form of her face is a fine oval, but rather long; her eyebrows are as full as any fair person's can be; her eyes are blue, without being insipid, and are very lively, and full of wit; her nose is aquiline, a little sharpened at the end. The Dauphiness has a small mouth, although her lips are rather thick, especially the under one, which is known to be the *Austrian lip*; her complexion is dazzling, and her natural colour might dispense her from having recourse to rouge; her deportment is that of an Archduchess, but her dignity is tempered by the sweetness of her disposition; and it is difficult to behold

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"this Princess, without being penetrated with respect, blended with sensibility."

The *bal paré*, the most tedious part of the festivals, because every thing was done there by etiquette, occasioned a good deal of confusion. The King had previously fixed the ceremonial of it. He had agreed, in conformity to the solicitations of the Ambassador of the Emperor and the Empress Queen, that he would bestow some mark of distinction upon Mademoiselle de Lorraine, who had the honour to belong to their august house; accordingly, he was to name her to dance before all the Dutchessees, immediately after the Princesses of the blood, and the Prince of Lambesc immediately after the Princes. This became a serious affair: the Dukes and Peers assembled at the house of M. de Broglie, Bishop and Count de Noyon, as being the oldest Peer at that time in Paris; and, notwithstanding the abhorrence the Church has for dancing, a memorial was discussed, drawn up, and read there, which the Prelate was commissioned to present to the King. In order to make it more solemn, the concurrence of the higher Nobility was required on this occasion, and a great number of them signed the memorial. The King, as usual, very much embarrassed, eluded a decision, and said, that dancing at the ball could not be of any consequence, as the choice of the men and women dancers depended only upon his will*. He called upon

* These expressions are taken from the singular letter of the King to the Dukes, which is here inserted entire. It is dated 17 May, 1770.

"The Ambassador of the Emperor, and of the Empress Queen, in an audience that he has had of me, has demanded
"on

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upon their fidelity, attachment, submission, and friendship. This answer, unworthy of a great Monarch, only gave fresh cause of ridicule, and no one assisted at the ceremony, except those whose presence could not be dispensed with.

There would be no end to it, were we to enumerate all the festivals, spectacles, and rejoicings, which succeeded each other during a month and upwards. But it is impossible to pass over in silence the dreadful catastrophe of the 30th of May, of that disastrous night, when, in the midst of a tumultuous joy, more people perished than are often destroyed in the most bloody engagement! It was the day on which the city had caused fireworks to be played off. The spot was exceedingly well chosen, round the statue of Lewis XV. in that vast circumference,

"on the part of his master (and I am obliged to credit all he says) that I would shew some mark of distinction to Mademoiselle de Lorraine, on the present occasion of the marriage of my grandson with the Archdutchess Antoinetta. Dancing at the ball being the only thing from which no inferences can be drawn, since the choice of the men and women dancers depends only upon my will, without any distinction of places, rank, or dignities, excepting the Princes and Princesses of the blood—who cannot be compared nor put upon a footing with any other French person—and not being willing to make innovations with regard to what is practised at my Court—I reckon that the Great, and the Nobility of my kingdom, in virtue of the fidelity, submission, attachment, and even friendship, they have always shewn to me, and to my predecessors, will never encourage any thing that can displease me, especially upon this occasion, when I am desirous of shewing my gratitude to the Empress Queen for the present she makes me, which I hope, as well as you, will insure the happiness of the remainder of my days.

"SAINT FLORENTIN."

"*A true Copy.*"

which

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which resembles more a plain than a square. An illumination upon the *Boulevards* was to succeed the fireworks, which determined the crowd to go by a wide street leading to the ramparts. It was, however, in that street that there happened an unparalleled instance of carnage. Three circumstances concurred to augment it. 1st. A plot formed by the thieves to occasion a stoppage, a crowd, a considerable tumult, that, in the midst of the confusion, they might carry on their designs the better, and rob with impunity. Several of the bodies of these villains, which were known, attested their crime. 2d. The neglect of the architect of the town, in not making the ground even, over which about six hundred thousand spectators were to pass—in not filling up the ditches that were in the way—and in not removing all the obstacles which could confine or press the multitude. 3dly. The insufficiency of the guard, and the parsimony of the town-hall, which would not allow a gratuity of a thousand crowns* to the regiment of French guards, as was required by the Marshal Duke de Biron, that they might attend that day, and compensate for the weakness and unfitness of the city guard.

However this may be, one hundred and thirty dead bodies, which remained on the spot, were immediately carried off, and deposited in the church-yard of the parish de la Madeleine de la Ville l'Eveque, to be owned; a solemn service was afterwards performed for them, by order of the *Lieutenant-criminel*, issued at the requisition of the King's Attorney. To this number of dead persons,

* One hundred and twenty-five pounds.

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if we add the wounded, the maimed, and the suffocated, conveyed into neighbouring houses, or to hospitals, and who died in a short time after; and all those who, thinking themselves safe, but being afterwards seized with a spitting of blood, in the course of six weeks fell the victims of their curiosity—it was computed that the loss might amount to eleven or twelve hundred. The circumstance that excited general indignation was, three days after this disaster, to see M. Bignon, the Provost of the Merchants, who was looked upon as the principal author of it, appearing publicly in his box at the opera.

The Dauphin, on the contrary, was excessively afflicted at having been the indirect cause of this misfortune. He sent to the Lieutenant of Police two thousand crowns*, the only money he could dispose of, to assist the most unfortunate of them. The Dauphiness, the Princes and Princesses of the blood, followed his example. Several societies did the same. The Parliament, one of the Members of which had narrowly escaped being among the number of the dead, wished to take cognizance of the fact, and find out the causes of it. An instance was quoted of the same kind, although infinitely less serious, which had happened under the reign of Lewis XII. in which the Provost and the two principal Sheriffs had been fined, for having neglected to attend to a bridge that had given way, and caused the death of four or five citizens. This was sufficient to alarm M. Bignon; but the Solicitor-General Seguier, in the account he gave of the affair, excu-

* Two hundred and fifty pounds.

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pated him; he attributed the whole to fatality: and the Magistrates being besides taken up with other objects, which affected them more, he escaped with the fright only, and with a regulation to restrain the jurisdiction of the city upon similar occasions.

When this melancholy affair had been quite exhausted, when people were tired of talking of it, and when all kinds of maledictions had been bestowed on the Provost of Merchants, more agreeable objects were resumed. The Dauphiness was the general topic of conversation; every one applauded her lively and engaging manners, and the freedom with which she got away from the multitude that surrounded her. She did nothing, however, without the King's consent. She used to call the Countess de Noailles, her Lady of the Bed-chamber, *Madame Etiquette*. This lady was very grave and austere, and was continually representing to the Princess that she derogated from the customs of her rank; but the Dauphiness did not the less follow her own inclinations, especially in matters which suited the cheerfulness of her disposition, and her health. She walked alone, without a Gentleman-usher; she went out when, and in what manner she pleased; she walked on foot; and in this way she formed her natural powers, and improved the strength she acquired by age. She invited to dinner and supper, whenever it occurred to her, her brothers, her sisters, her aunts, and went to eat along with them with the same freedom: in a word, she introduced, as much as she could, the intimate familiarity in which the Court of Vienna live among themselves, who, though very jealous of their ceremonials in public,

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pass their lives in the utmost ease and good-humour within.

This mode of living, so analogous to the real disposition of Lewis XV. would have been infinitely suitable to him in those happy times, when he possessed the same innocence as his daughter-in-law. But at a certain time of life, reformation takes place no more. Besides, it was the interest of the Ministers, of the favourites, and of his mistress, that he should not give himself up too much to his family; and if his friendship and his kindness for the Dauphiness did not permit him to restrain her as much as they could have wished, they at least succeeded in keeping him from her, instead of drawing him nearer to her, to which the easy manners she had adopted with his Majesty would necessarily have contributed.

After all the spectacles with which French gallantry had amused the Dauphiness, the King gave her one of a more majestic nature, which is only seen in that kingdom, and the awful view of which might have inspired the Princess with an idea of the grandeur of the throne on which she was one day to be seated, if it had not been at the same time accompanied with the consternation of all the persons who composed it. We mean the Bed of Justice of the 27th June. In its origin, and according to its true nature, a Bed of Justice is a formal sitting of the King in Parliament, in order to deliberate on the most important affairs of the State. It is the continuation of those antient general assemblies, which were formerly holden, and were known under the name of *Champ de Mars*, or *de Mai*, and which were afterwards

afterwards called *Placites Generaux, Cours Plenieres, Plein Parlement, Grand Conseil.*

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The Kings were at that time seated upon a throne of gold. Since these assemblies have been made in the interior of a Court of Judicature, a canopy and cushions have been substituted to the throne. From hence is derived the appellation of Bed of Justice; because, in the antient language, a seat covered with a canopy was called a bed. Five cushions form the seat of this bed. The Monarch is seated upon one, another is at his back, two serve him for arms, and support the elbows of his Majesty, the fifth is under his feet. Charles V. renewed the ornament; Lewis XII. afterwards made a new one, which still subsisted in the reign of Lewis XV. who has made such frequent use of it, that it would not be surprizing if a new one should be wanted at this time.

The Kings collected in these general assemblies all those who had a right of voting, the Princes, the Peers, the Barons, the Senators, or people belonging to the Law. The Sovereign caused to be proposed, and often proposed himself, the subject of deliberation. This assembly was really a serious one; every man gave his opinion loud, that the King might hear and consider it. At present, on the contrary, it is the Chancellor who goes round to collect the votes from the several ranks. Every one speaks low, or is silent. The Prince hears nothing of this dumb scene, in which, by a strange perversion of the nature of things, he is unable to receive any information, and persists in a resolution taken; while the real design of the meeting—which, in it's institution, was to enlighten him,

1770. and either to confirm him in his resolution, or to dissuade him from it, according to the good or evil which might appear to result from it—has not been in the least fulfilled.

In the primitive form of Beds of Justice, those assemblies could not be too much wished for; the result of which was information and knowledge to the Sovereign, infinite good to the people, and inestimable advantages to the whole kingdom. The public grievances were exposed, impositions were detected, and truth was hear'd, and shone in all it's brightness*.

A Bed of Justice at present is but the shadow of the former; the King only repeats there what he has decided in his Council. Every thing passes without a previous examination, without any real deliberation. It is an act of absolute power, which commonly takes place only to confirm laws rejected by the Courts, and consequently laws that are bad and oppressive: it is a day of mourning to the nation.

Such was the one at which the Dauphiness assisted in a Turret. It was holden with the usual ceremonies at Versailles. The Chancellor, having received his orders from the King, pronounced a discourse, the summary of which was, that his Majesty had, in the first instance, refused to admit the petition for a demand of justification before the Court of Peers, which had been presented to him by the Duke d'Aiguillon in the month of January 1769, persisting in his intention of extinguishing the troubles

* We may consult upon this subject, a *Letter upon the Beds of Justice*, dated the 28th August 1756.

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of Britany, and of suffering nothing which might renew them : that afterwards his Majesty, having seen that the aforesaid Commandant of Britany found himself accused by informations made in that province, and being willing himself to take cognizance of the nature of those accusations, had issued letters patent for the inquiry : that the access to the throne had been open, the formalities observed, the witnesses hear'd, and every circumstance attended to ; but that his Majesty had found, with indignation, in the course of the proceedings, 1st, That the liberty was taken to enter into the examination and discussion of orders issued from the throne, which being ever connected with administration, ought to remain among the secrets of the Ministry ; that boldness had been carried so far as to annex decrees of Council to the depositions. 2^{dly}, That in all this affair, a revolting animosity, and a pointed partiality were prevalent ; that the more it was searched into, the more there was found in it a mysterious train of enormities and iniquities, from which his Majesty wished to turn away his eyes ; that consequently it was his pleasure to hear nothing more of this process, to put a stop, by the fullness of his authority, to all further proceedings, and to impose an absolute silence upon all parties, with respect to reciprocal accusations.

This discourse was followed by the registering of new letters patent, which annulled every thing that had hitherto been done, as much against the Duke d'Aiguillon as against Messrs. de Chalotais and de Caradeux, and which ordered, that every act concerning this affair should be considered as if it had never happened, forbid any person to acknowledge it,

1770. and imposed upon all respectively the most absolute silence.

Our readers, whose indignation must already be excited by the recital of this fact, will dispense us from making any reflection upon the humiliating step the Monarch had been prevailed upon to take in this affair, which, for the third time, ended in the same manner. It seemed as if he had been induced to give the greatest eclat to this assembly, merely that it should more absolutely become the subject of the derision of France, and of all Europe. He was, perhaps, the only person in his kingdom who was not ashamed of it. That very evening, he appointed the Duke d'Aiguillon to be of the party of Marly, and admitted him to the honour of supping with him.

The Parliament returned from the Bed of Justice, transported with rage. Having already foreseen the stroke of authority which might proceed from that irregular sitting, they had passed a resolution, in presence of the Princes and Peers, in which they declared, that they would never consider any accused person as justified, who should be so in a Bed of Justice, and namely the Duke d'Aiguillon. To prevent the consequences of this resolution, the King, in quitting the assembly, intimated to the Princes and Peers who reconducted him, according to etiquette, prohibitions to go the next day to the *Palais*, as well as to take any part in the deliberations begun, concerning the former Commandant of Britany; and ordered them, in case they should be present in the Courts, on account of some other business, when the affair of Britany was meant to be discussed, to withdraw immediately.

The

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2 July.

The Chancellor, ever crafty, flattered himself, that he should delude the Parliament by this turn; but the latter did not lose sight of their principal object, and issued a decree for ever memorable, wherein declaring that the Duke d'Aiguillon being seriously inculpated, and tainted with suspicions, and even with facts, which blemished his honour, they suspended that Peer from the functions of Peerage, till such time as by a solemn sentence passed in the Court of Peers, according to all the forms and ceremonials prescribed by the laws, and the ordinances of the kingdom, to which nothing could be substituted, he should have justified himself fully, &c.

Commissioners from Parliament immediately repaired, by order of the Court, to the printer, to have the minute printed under their own inspection; ten thousand copies were taken of it: it was immediately notified to the Duke d'Aiguillon, who happened to be at home; and the Chambers did not separate till after they had received intelligence that the decree was completely executed.

M. de Maupeou, duped in his turn by this step, which he did not expect, experienced the same dissatisfaction as the Parliament had received from him; and when the decree was presented to him, he tore it in a rage. It was necessary again to have recourse to the King, and to suffer the reproaches of his Majesty. The decree was to be cancelled, and that immediately; the consequences it would not fail of producing, were instantly to be put a stop to; the ferment was to be prevented, which it would excite in the other Courts, especially at Rennes, and among the States of Britany, which

were

1770. were to be opened that year. This produced a multitude of commotions, a hundred remonstrances, instead of one, were going to appear, perhaps suspensions from service, cessations, and dismissions. Had the Chancellor been the only person to direct the Sovereign, all these things would not have alarmed him: he knew his corps; he had calculated the nature of the resistance which each member might oppose, and he knew in what manner to manage some of them, to intimidate others, and thus to subdue them all in time, and in detail; but his influence was counterbalanced by the ascendant which the Duke de Choiseul still preserved over the mind of his Majesty. That Minister had unmasked him; there were no hopes of regaining his confidence, and the Chancellor knew, on the contrary, that the Duke intrigued underhand to excite and support the Parliament in their enterprizes. Revenge, that passion so active in the minds of some men, induced him to entertain hopes of overcoming the difficulties, of surmounting the obstacles, and overthrowing even his benefactor, to whom he owed his elevation: an extremity to which the Duke compelled him, since he was become his enemy. For this purpose it was necessary to form a more strict connection with the Duke d'Aiguillon, the favourite of the favourite.

3 July. The very next day after the passing of the decree, this Chief of the Law caused the King in his Council to issue one, which cancelled it, and enjoined the accused to continue his functions as Peer of France. He had it signified to the Parliament, in an unusual and contemptuous manner. This gave occasion to fresh

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fresh remonstrances, and not without great reason; for, independent of all the violations of forms, what could be more absurd, than, in a matter which included crimes of so heavy a nature, the troubles of a great province, a matter that had lasted several years, had given rise to such monstrous proceedings, and had exposed the liberties of such an infinite number of citizens, to find the accused and the accusers alternately innocent; and, after the Attornies General had been acknowledged innocent, to declare the Commandant who had accused them the same?—What could be more contradictory, than, after having solemnly agreed to the necessity of clearing the Peerage from the crimes of a Peer, or the Peer from the crimes laid to his charge*—after having made the King say, that he would allow an entire freedom of opinion, and that the guilty, if there were any, should be punished with the greatest severity—to make him afterwards pronounce, inconsiderately, that there were none?—What could be more absurd, than to pretend that this was only done to appease, and to bury in perpetual oblivion the dissensions, when, after having in vain attempted this mode several times, it was on the contrary experienced, that it was the true method of reviving, increasing, and perpetuating them.

The manner in which M. de la Chalotais behaved on a similar occasion, and the conduct of the Duke d'Aiguillon upon this, are of themselves

* Expressions in the discourse of the Chancellor at the opening of the sittings of the 4th of April.

1770. sufficient to decide which was the real culprit. The latter, far from complaining, as the former had done, that by so despotic an act his innocence was prevented from appearing—far from insisting with the King, that he would be pleased to permit him to justify himself juridically, and leave justice to its free course—was so imprudent as to manifest his joy publicly, and, on the very evening of the cancelling of the decree, to give a splendid supper to his partizans and his creatures. The Duke de Brissac thought otherwise of this matter. That Nobleman, of a romantic turn—whose expressions always bore the stamp of his lively, original, and picturesque imagination—exclaimed with energy; *that the accused had saved his head, but that his neck had been twisted.*

In the mean while, the remonstrances of the Parliament were carried to the King, and a sentence inserted in them, which was purposely directed against the Chancellor, when, speaking of the last letters patent, it was said, *Is this ignorance, or is it knavery, in the person who drew them up?* completed his hatred against them. He swore, that the authors of these words should blot them out with their tears; and from that moment he wanted his Majesty to issue four letters *de Cachet* against them; but the King did not immediately give way to his suggestion, from the fear of exciting a ferment, he still entertained hopes of quelling; hopes which he soon after lost. Not only the Parliament of Paris persisted in employing themselves upon the consequences of the affair, but several of those in the provinces also entered into resolutions against the Duke d'Aiguillon. The Parliament of Bourdeaux, particularly,

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particularly, signalized itself by a resolution which procured to the young Magistrate, who was the author * of it, captivity and fame. Two Magistrates † of the Parliament of Rennes, more interested than any other, in not acquiescing in the despotism of the Sovereign, were arrested at Compiègne, as they came out from an audience with his Majesty. The Monarch, knowing no longer how to extricate himself from the labyrinth in which he was engaged, tired of wandering at a venture, and of falling from one snare into another, resolved to repose an absolute confidence in the Chancellor, and to try whether, by resigning his authority to him, he would disengage him with honour. He became a mere spectator, with a firm resolution of exposing him, as his Courtiers would, to ridicule, if he did not keep his word, or failed in his attempt; this his good sense made him judge would be the event; notwithstanding which, he put his destiny into his hands. This was what M. de Maupeou wanted; not that he had any fixed plan, but he was too well acquainted with mankind not to calculate how far they might be led by the fear of punishments or the allurements of rewards.

He began by a stroke of authority, worthy of himself, and of all the preceding measures. He brought the King to the Parliament by surprise, and when they had scarce time to assemble. He caused all the minutes of the proceedings concern-

* M. Dupaty, Solicitor-General of that Court. The circumstance that rendered the accusation against him more serious was, that, being the King's servant, he was dispensed from interfering in the resolution, far from suggesting it.

† Messrs. de la Noue and de Laiac.

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1770. ing the Duke d'Aiguillon, to be taken away from the office. He gave intimations by his Majesty, to prohibit any deliberation, and even any discussion of that affair. He, in some measure, turned out from the grand chamber the Gentlemen of the Courts of Inquests and Requests, who received orders from his Majesty to withdraw, and to repair to their respective chambers; and, by several little subtleties of form, he prolonged matters to the time of the vacations, and thus acquired leisure to meditate other enterprizes of a more decisive nature.

M. de Maupeou was perfectly aware that he should never succeed, if he did not get rid of the Minister who stood in his way. This he was constantly aiming at, in concert with the Duke d'Aiguillon, who was not less interested in it, and the Countess Dubarri, whose detestation of the Duke de Choiseul still increased, and who could not forgive his contempt of her. The Lady, more open than the other two, did not conceal her antipathy; and the circumstance which rendered her more dangerous, was, that she gave a childish and playful turn to it, very pleasing to Lewis XV. She sometimes took an orange in each hand, and, tossing them alternately in the air, cried out: *Up with you Choiseul; up with you Praslin.*—Another time, having dismissed a cook, who resembled the Duke, her enemy, she said to the King: *I have turned off my Choiseul to-day, when will you get rid of your's?*

It will scarce be credited, that the person who contributed most to that event was the Dutchess of Grammont, his sister. One would have said, that, not satisfied with having been the first cause
of

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of his discredit, she could have no peace till she had effected his total expulsion from Court; so awkwardly did she attempt to avenge herself, and to supplant her rival. Instead of remaining steadily at Versailles, and of secretly undermining her enemies, according to the manner of Courtiers, she could not stifle her rage, but banished herself, under pretence of travelling. She went to the waters, and, having passed through several Parliament towns, furnished matter for a serious accusation of an odious kind, more proper than any other to irritate the King. He was given to understand, that she had had conferences with them, and had excited them to resist, by assuring them of the protection of her brother. This accusation produced such an effect on the mind of his Majesty, that from that moment he visibly grew cool to his Minister; he no longer honoured him with a single word of conversation, although he continued to transact business with him, and to admit him to his suppers.

Lewis XV. had it much at heart to be delivered from the broils of his Parliaments; but perhaps he would never have taken violent measures against the Duke de Choiseul, if to this grievance another had not been added, that of endeavouring to kindle a war with the English, as the means of making himself necessary, and of regaining all his influence. This accusation, though probable, adapted to the character of the Minister, and suggested by circumstances, was, however, difficult to be proved, and the King still hesitated. In vain his charming mistress—at a time when the Prince, inflamed with love, and heated with wine, which she poured out for him

1770. him, refused her nothing she asked—had prevailed upon him to sign the disgrace of the Duke de Choiseul. When he came to himself the next morning, he threw the decree of proscription into the fire. The Chancellor had recourse to the extreme measure, which he had meditated for a long while. He caused an edict to be carried to the Parliament, containing in the preamble the most serious accusations against the Magistrates, so that they could not register it, without dishonouring themselves. They sent deputies to protest against it. A Bed of Justice was holden in consequence, where, notwithstanding their decree, they had the mortification to see the Duke d'Aiguillon seated among the Peers. They made protests and remonstrances, and suspended their functions, declaring, that their profound affliction did not leave their minds free enough to decide upon the fortunes, lives, and honour of the subjects. At length the extraordinary conflict began, in which the King persisted in not listening to his Parliament till they had reassumed their functions, and the Parliament in not reassuming their functions till the King had listened to them. The incredible spectacle lasted for a fortnight, of a Monarch announcing himself as absolute, and requiring that his will should be the law, and of a body of Magistrates disobeying four several times his orders, given either in writing from his royal hand, or by word of mouth, or by the strongest and most precise letters of command; and yet, during all that time, the Prince had not displayed that despotic power which he arrogated to himself, and which he declared to reside essentially in him.

Paris

7 Dec.

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Paris was in expectation, and this event was the subject of discussion among all the politicians, and the several classes of the citizens. The Great, and the military, who are inclined to an absolute and passive obedience—and who are desirous that the King should do what he pleases, in hopes of enjoying the same privilege in their turn, by the right of the strongest—loudly censured the Parliament, and pronounced them guilty of a criminal revolt. The Clergy, the sworn enemy of a corps which had always opposed their pretensions—which prevented them from extending their power, and subjecting even authority itself, by ruling over the consciences of mankind—animated by that spirit of charity with which they are penetrated, devoted the Magistracy to capital punishments. The people, oppressed with taxes, and eating their bread at a very dear price, without the least opposition from the part of those whom they were hitherto accustomed to look upon as their fathers and defenders, beheld the dispute with great indifference. They interested themselves no longer in the cause of a society which meanly betrayed them, and only grew warm upon matters of personal concern to itself. The philosophers alone, and true Frenchmen, who reasoned a little more deeply—impressed with the consequences intervening from the fall of the Parliament—were afflicted to see them deprived of an authority which they had indeed exerted only for themselves, but which, in a moment of patriotic enthusiasm, they might have employed to a better purpose; whereas, by their destruction, the most formidable despotism was established. During this violent crisis, the Magistrates, who expected every

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night to be carried off by letters *de Cachet*, were surprized the next morning to find themselves still at liberty. But the infant was not yet arrived, and the only result of this was, the event which the cabal conspiring against the Duke de Choiseul wished for. Madame Dubarri, prompted by the Duke d'Aiguillon and the Chancellor, said to the King, in proportion as being tired with this painful contest, he communicated his grief and anxiety to her, that there would be no end to any thing while the Parliament felt themselves supported at Court by a Minister whom they considered as capable of averting the strokes levelled against them, and as more powerful than even his Majesty was, while there existed a correspondence between them. This was attacking Lewis XV. by his foible, and he consented positively to M. de Choiseul's expulsion. The Duke de la Vrilliere, a new title given to the Count de St. Florentin, for his good and loyal services in Britany, went to carry him the fatal letter *de Cachet*, conceived in these terms :

" COUSIN,

" The dissatisfaction I experience of your services,
 " obliges me to banish you to Chanteloup, where
 " you will repair in four-and-twenty hours. I would
 " have sent you much farther if it had not been for
 " the particular esteem I have for the Dutchesse de
 " Choiseul, in whose welfare I am much interested.
 " Be careful that your conduct does not force me to
 " take some other step. I therefore pray God, my
 " Cousin, to keep you in his holy protection."

The

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The presence of his colleague was a humiliating circumstance, as this Minister, uncle to the Duke d'Aiguillon, could not but have been inwardly very well pleased with the message. Accordingly, the banished man was not the dupe of his compliment of condolence, and answered him: *I am persuaded, Monsieur le Duc, of all the satisfaction you feel in bringing me such intelligence.* Never did favourite, however, go out of place with so much glory. His disgrace was a triumph. Although it had been signified to him not to receive any body during his stay at Paris, an immense crowd of people of all sorts left their names at his gate, and the Duke de Chartres, his particular friend, forcing through every obstacle, threw himself into his arms, and wept over him.

The next day, that of his departure, those who had not been able to see the Duke de Choiseul, placed themselves upon his passage, and the road was lined with a double row of coaches.

Marshall d'Estrées was the only one who did not join in the numerous acclamations. He was dying, and upon being informed of the disgrace of his capital enemy, the news revived him. *The r——l is then gone, exclaimed he—I die satisfied!* and soon after he expired.

From whence could this excess of fanaticism so suddenly proceed? Did the Duke de Choiseul deserve those regrets? Was his disgrace a real calamity to France? It is certain, that at that time he was very much extolled; that this Minister, who had been much censured, was become lately the idol of a certain party, and of the blind multitude, who judge upon report, and suffer themselves to be led by any one whose interest it is, or who has an ardent desire to se-

1770. cure their affections. The members of the Parliament, less undoubtedly from their admiration of his talents, than from hatred to their common enemy, affected to say in all companies that he was the greatest Minister France had ever produced; that it would be the most irreparable loss the kingdom could sustain, if he were disgraced; and, from this continual repetition of private praises, a general concert of eulogium resulted, which was agreed to, though no man was well able to assign a motive for his acquiescence. It is by his measures that he should be judged; by comparing the situation his departments were in when he took them, to that in which he left them.

The misfortunes of the war of 1756 cannot reasonably be attributed to him; the course of them was too far advanced, when he was raised to the head of affairs, for him to be able to produce any change upon this point. Some thanks are even due to him for the peace, which would have been more ignominious on our part, had it not been for that family compact, of which Spain alone had reason to repent, although she did not appear to signify any displeasure to him on that account, from the hopes he probably inspired her with of better success in future. It would be tedious to recapitulate all his actions as Secretary of State for the maritime and military departments, and for foreign affairs. We shall only insist upon the spirit of dependence which he had introduced in all the departments, and which was unprecedented; upon his excessive prodigality with regard to his creatures: faults which are inconsistent with the character of a great Minister, because they necessarily tend to thwart every enterprize of genius—
because

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because every thing at present is done by calculation, and that the Monarch the most formidable, and the most certain of conquest, is he, who by his œconomy has contrived to accumulate sufficiently to support the expences of the war for a longer time. In this point of view, all those deep and artful contrivances to foment intestine divisions, or to engage in foreign quarrels the nations most dreaded by his master, were misapplied, inasmuch as he sacrificed the treasures of the kingdom, in these projects, by which he enervated, and made it still more incapable of resuming it's superiority. When M. de Vergennes, Ambassador from France to Constantinople—whom the Duke de Choiseul pressed to make the Porte declare war against the Empress of Russia—wrote to him: *I will make the Turks take arms whenever you please; but I must previously inform you, that they will be beaten; that this war will turn out contrary to your intentions, by rendering Russia more glorious and more powerful*—that negotiator shewed himself undoubtedly much superior in politics to the Duke de Choiseul.

The circumstance which shews still more the depth of his views, is, that notwithstanding so many disadvantages, it can scarce be doubted, but that he had serious thoughts of engaging France in another war; which his enemies accused him of to the King. The orders he had given to the officers sent to India at this period, were absolutely hostile, as they have since declared. He intended that it should have been begun by Spain; and, by means of the family compact, his master would have found himself engaged in it against his will. The weakness of the character of Lewis XV. made him certain that he would not re-

1770. list the solicitations of that ally, which had so lately sacrificed herself for him; and by that same weakness he was convinced, that, conscious of his want of a Minister who had the management of such a variety of intrigues, he would not dare to dismiss him.

The subject of the difference at that time, was a pretention of the Spaniards upon the Falkland and Malouine Islands, where they had seized upon Port Egmont, from whence they had driven the English. The latter complained loudly of an enterprize, which, according to them, was nothing less than the infraction of the most solemn treaties, and threatened to proceed to the last extremities, if immediate satisfaction were not given to them. The conferences were opened with a great deal of acrimony on both sides; and the circumstance which confirms that Spain acted only by a foreign impulse, is, that the Duke de Choiseul had scarce quitted the administration, than the face of the negotiations was changed, and his Catholic Majesty not only consented to disavow the enterprize upon Port Egmont, and to return the Falkland Islands, but acceded even to a plain and simple acceptance of the evacuation, without insisting upon a pacific examination of his rights, which had been at first agreed upon, but was soon refused with haughtiness by the Court of London. The expulsion therefore of this turbulent Minister at this critical period was a fortunate event. In vain did his partizans, not being very well able to particularize the good which he had done during his administration, vaguely exclaim, that he kept the English in awe, that they were afraid of him; his retreat, far from being the signal of war, was on the contrary the sealing of the peace; neither have the enemies
of

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of France since ventured, to the end of the reign, to take any advantage of her misfortunes, of her divisions, of her weakness, and of her humiliation.

Though the King had not the same motives of discontent against the Duke de Praslin as against the Duke de Choiseul, his disgrace was a necessary consequence of the former. He received the same day a letter de *Cachet* much shorter, and more contemptuous. It signified, "I have no further occasion for your services, and I banish you to Praslin, where you will repair in four-and-twenty hours." Had it not been for the mortification of receiving such a message, the Nobleman would not have been much concerned at his retreat. He only kept his post from motives of complaisance to his cousin; and had no desire but for tranquillity, which was his secret wish. His retreat from the naval department was not felt in the least; and yet, if we only consider the mechanical part of his functions, we shall find that he had not fulfilled them improperly, and that he had caused more uneasiness to the rivals of France than his cousin, who was industriously represented as the object of their terror. Sixty-four ships were at that time reckoned in the ports, independent of those which were upon the stocks; all the materials necessary to construct ten or twelve more, and about fifty large frigates or sloops †: this was a prodigious re-establishment of the maritime forces of France in five or six years time, and shewed what she might be able to do with œconomy; a favourite virtue, the

† This is the account the Duke de Praslin gives himself of his administration, in his letter to the Count de Vergennes, which has been before mentioned.

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advantage of which the Duke had experienced in his own affairs, and which he applied with success to those of the King. Perhaps it made him too much neglect the forming of sailors and officers by more frequent armaments. But the mercantile branch of the navy might be able to supply the first object, and even the second, if he had had the power to change in this respect the mode of administration pursued among the officers of the Royal navy.

This was his capital fault. Instead of following the traces of his predecessor, he only extended the prerogatives, encouraged the insolence, the depredations, and the luxury of that corps, by destroying the balance of power which had been established in the arsenals between the Commandant and the Intendant, by the ordonnance of 1689. He made the first attack against these regulations, which were soon neglected, and were succeeded by all the caprices of the innovating persons who came after him. He carried his complaisance for these Gentlemen so far, as to attend to their amusements, by causing play-houses to be constructed in the several ports. He laid the first stone to that of Brest, and assisted at the opening of it. If after a long disquisition of the famous process of the Director of Louisiana against the Governor of that colony—which the former, a victim to his grief and perhaps to the atrocious crimes of his adversary, had not the good fortune to see finished—M. de Kerrecel, Captain of a ship, the military Commandant in question, was convicted with ignominy: the reason of this was, that M. de Rochemore, of a distinguished family, left after him, to avenge his memory, an active and courageous widow, who, by dint of patience,

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science, solicitations, favour, and influence, prevailed against the threats of her powerful adversary.

We may also object to the administration of M. de Praslin, that despotism exercised in the Colonies, and especially at Saint Domingo; where, by a disgusting act of dishonesty, after the inhabitants had been compelled to buy themselves off from the militia, this corps was soon after re-established; and the Magistrates, obliged to defend the inhabitants, with regard to the consequences of the disorders occasioned by these troops, were treated with still greater indignity than those of the mother-country; they were disturbed in their functions, threatened, arrested, and transferred to France, where, being made prisoners, they were superseded in their tribunal, in the most illegal manner.

The cession of Louisiana to Spain, though it was a dismembering of his department, was, without doubt, a fault rather to be attributed to the Minister for foreign affairs, than to him. We shall not examine how far it was a fault in politics, to give up a country the most fertile, healthy, diversified, and most beautiful in the world; we have said enough on this point. But we cannot avoid lamenting his indolence in not obtaining a resolution of the Council upon the complaints addressed to him by the unfortunate inhabitants of that colony, and in not urging their remonstrances to the King; and lastly, in neglecting to do them justice with regard to the harsh, or rather barbarous treatment, which these complaints drew upon those unfortunate people, when a foreign Governor, without any form of trial, caused twelve of the most illustrious Chiefs of New Orleans to be shot, whose pretended crime was only their

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their blind attachment to a master who did not deserve it, and who, besides, made over, without their consent, to a foreign Sovereign, a right of life and death, which he had not himself.

It would have been an ill-advised step of the Chancellor, after the expulsion of the Choiseuls, not to have suffered the ferment of the Parliament to subside, at least for a while. He made use of the Prince of Condé for this purpose. He knew that this Prince, in love with the Princess of Monaco, who sued for a divorce from her husband, had a strong desire to have this cause tried, which had been interrupted with the ordinary course of justice. M. de Maupeou employed this illustrious agent to give the Magistrates to understand, that if they would reassume their functions, his Majesty was disposed to withdraw the edict. Deceived by so august an interposition, they returned to their duties; they expressed their gratitude to his Highness by expediting immediately, and favourably, the affair in which he interested himself. But soon after, fresh and more precise letters of command undeceived them. They were obliged to remain again with the Chambers assembled, and to connect, in some degree, the interests of the nation with their own:—they resolved, at the same time, that they interrupted the examination of the affairs of individuals, to employ themselves in every thing that concerned public affairs, and consequently that of the corn being one of the most essential, they entered upon it with an affected zeal, of which the people were not the dupes.

The Chancellor, master of the field, took advantage of the circumstance, to declare to the King, that

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that this was the proper moment to secure his authority for ever, and to prevent the insurrection of his Parliaments, by being firm, by displaying all the severity of his justice, and by striking off, if it were necessary, some of the heads of the most mutinous, in order that the Magistrates might be sensible that this was no longer a jest.

To understand this expression, unbecoming as it should seem in the present circumstances, we must be informed, that the First President having, before this, carried to the King the representations of his Company of the 3d December, his Majesty asked him for them, and threw them into the fire, and afterwards gave him a paper, which ought, according to custom, to contain his answer: How great was the surprize of M. d'Aligre, on opening it, to read these words!—*Your Majesty must listen to the representations with a great deal of ill temper; you must appear to be very angry, and throw them into the fire.* He was obliged to go again, and to ask the Chancellor whether those were really the King's words which he was to carry back. This disconcerted a little the Lord Chief Justice.

The more effectually to recommend his conduct to the King, M. de Maupeou gave him to understand, that whatever turn matters should take, the result would be the same one way or the other. If the Parliament, returning to their duty, and convinced of the will of the Sovereign, should conform to the edict, it would become a law, from which they could no more depart, without the crime of disobedience, and they deprived themselves for the future of the several pretences which they had hitherto urged, to cover their seditious proceedings:—if, on the contrary, they

1770. they persevered in their opposition, there never could be a more justifiable reason for depriving refractory magistrates of their offices, and replacing them by others, who would accept the conditions prescribed to them. He was fully persuaded that he should always preserve a *Kernel of a Parliament*—that was his expression—as at Paw and at Rennes, and that this would be sufficient to form another Court with ease. He depended upon the most numerous part of the Grand Chamber, upon the Abbés, and upon his creatures, who would throw off the mask upon occasion. The whole corps not being able to be shaken, he expected to triumph by attacking its members separately.

From the
19th to
20th Jan.
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The same night, at the same hour, they were all awakened in the name of the King. Two *mousquetaires* entered their chamber, and presented to them the order to reassume their functions—to answer in writing *Yes* or *No*—and to sign that word alone, without periphrasis or modification. In fact, several even of the firmest were intimidated by this step:—partaking of the alarms of their wives, of their children, and of their family in tears, they had the weakness to retract; but at the instant when their enemy was applauding himself for the stratagem, and was giving an account of it to his Majesty, reanimated by their brethren, and united the next day in a body, they disavowed the error of the night.

Matters were too far advanced on both sides, and there was no possibility of retracting. The following night the Magistrates were again awakened. An officer of the Council notified to each of them a decree of Council, declaring that their employments were confiscated, and forbidding them, for the future, to exercise

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exercise any of their functions, or even to assume the title of Members of the Parliament. This officer was scarce withdrawn, when some *mousquetaires* entered, and brought them letters *de cachet*, which banished them all to different places, and at a great distance from each other.

All this conduct was so strange, and so odious, that the Chancellor was himself duped by it, and, being forsaken by his own partizans, had not that *kernel of a Parliament* upon which he depended. There was not a single Magistrate who did not readily submit to his punishment, and the King's Council only remained. He was a man of resources, and obviated this first difficulty, by coming himself to install the Council, which was to be substituted to the Parliament. He has since owned, that in the first moment of the ferment at that time in Paris, he had been obliged to arm himself with courage, and was not at his ease when he went to the *Palais*. His apprehensions soon subsided. The scene passed in presence of an immense crowd of the most distinguished persons of the Court, the military, and the citizens of all ranks, without any thing more than consternation being expressed. When this first sensation was passed, the Parisians recovered their cheerfulness, and the Gentlemen of the Council escaped with only the jests, sarcasms, and epigrams of the wits, and the hootings of the populace.

After having erected this phantom of a tribunal, which gave him time for recollection, M. de Maupeou had but two things more to fear: that the Chatelet would cease their functions in Paris, and that the Parliament of the provinces would do the same.

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same. He prevented the first inconvenience by avoiding all collusion between the superior and inferior Court, till he had bribed the Chiefs ; and with regard to the second, he managed with great cunning and dexterity. He caused a report to be spread by his emissaries, that the suspension of the affairs of individuals, agreed on by the Parliament of Paris, had been the capital fault committed by that banished corps ; that without this circumstance, the Chancellor would never have been able to execute his projects of revenge ; and that he was very desirous that the other classes should act in the same manner, that he might have a pretence for destroying them in their turn. These insidious reports alarmed them ; so that, instead of sending in their resignations all at once, or remaining the Chambers assembled, and thus interrupting the whole course of justice from one end of the kingdom to the other, and by this general calamity inspiring the people with a salutary fear, exciting their respectful remonstrances, inviting the Princes, the Peers, and the Great, to second them, and prompting the King with a desire to hear them, and to be informed of his error, and of making him sensible of the necessity of it—these Companies contented themselves with sending a multiplicity of remonstrances, which the Monarch never read, and which only appeared in public as mysterious and criminal papers : they, on the contrary, redoubled their zeal in expediting the causes, and gave occasion to the saying, that they stood in need of that lash of the whip. The Chancellor, by this means, acquired leisure to continue his business with ease, and to execute his project for the regeneration of the Magistracy.

He

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He began by creating six superior Councils, at Arras, Blois, Chaalons, Clermont, Lyons, and Poitiers. The specious pretence for these establishments was to forward the dispatch of affairs, by diminishing the extent of the jurisdiction of the Parliament; and the real motive was, to facilitate the method of acquiring a sufficient number of persons to complete his new Court, by thus reducing the number of it's members. When the first stroke was given, he no longer dreaded to appear a second time in the *Palais*, to register the edict for the creation of these Councils. He there pronounced a speech, the purport of which was, to insinuate to the nation, that nothing could be more happy for them, than the arrangements announced; but that it had been necessary to take advantage of the moment in which the ancient Magistrates had disappeared, to put a stop to confusion, and to the magnitude of the evil; to free the course of justice from it's restraints; and, in a word, to produce a more fortunate state of regularity and order, which had so long been wished for. Besides this first advantage, he announced reforms no less salutary, such as the suppressing the venality of offices; of rendering the administration of justice gratuitous; of simplifying proceedings; and of facilitating the punishment of crimes.

Having thus considerably lessened the jurisdiction of the Parliament, he employed himself in finding persons fit to compose it; and he reduced them to the number of seventy-five. The Grand Council had more than ever reason to complain of that Company, which, since they had reassumed their functions, had not ceased to perplex them. M. de Maupeou

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turned his views towards that Court, and flattered himself that he should find the greatest part of them obedient to his impulse; more especially as that tribunal was the only one that had remained shamefully silent with respect to the outrages committed against the Magistracy and the Laws. The Chamber of Accounts, although not less oppressed and despised by its rival, was at that time agitated by a patriotic ferment, not likely to be lasting, but yet which left him no hopes of deriving any advantage from them; and as for the Court of Aids, he on the contrary thought it necessary to suppress them, in order to avoid the opposition he expected from them. He thought himself fortunate even in seducing some of their members. Some he chose from among the order of Advocates; and, convinced of the necessity of forming his assembly speedily, he was not very nice about the remainder. He was admirably well served respecting the ecclesiastical members, by the Archbishop of Paris, who gave him his own nephew. In this manner he collected two-thirds of his Counsellors. The *Great Bench*, which was only to be composed of five Presidents, including the First, was that which gave the most trouble to this new creator: not that he was in want of persons who aspired to the honour of the *Mortier*, but no one would venture to break the ice. He was obliged to have recourse to men of distinction, but whose characters were tainted, and gave them for Chief a Counsellor of State inferior to themselves. This was the Intendant of Paris, Berthier de Sauvigny, a man of very moderate abilities, and of whose docility he was well assured; he was besides very rich. As he was ruled by his wife,
the

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the Chancellor excited her vanity and ambition. She determined her husband, who, on the day before his installation, still ashamed of the part he had undertaken, had not dared to declare himself, and fetched deep sighs at Madame Berthier's, without any one's being able to form a conjecture on the cause of his grief, which was not even suspected.

The Bar was not easy to be composed: notwithstanding the weakness of that body, and the Chancellor's persuasions, he could not prevail upon them to associate with the new tribunal. He only found young Fleuri, a *roué* *, in the strongest sense of the word, oppressed with debts, a slave to an avaritious woman, who, by being highly bribed, determined to remain the only one of his corps, and to accept the post of Attorney General; which she considered less on the side of the dignity, than on that of the immense profit she proposed to make of it. With regard to the Solicitors General, reduced to two, at one time he imagined he should get them from the Council. For the first of them, he had in view M. de Tolozan, son to a merchant at Lyons, a man who esteemed himself too fortunate to illustrate himself thus at once, by obtaining one of the first posts in the Magistracy. He had just served in the Court of the Mint of that City, and had exercised his functions in a confined manner. Although totally ignorant of the first principles of jurisprudence; although his elocution as well as his person was heavy, yet he had a fund of vanity, which was a substitute for every thing; he looked upon himself

* A man who deserves the gallows.

1771. as the oracle of the Council, and, by his perseverance in labour, he supplied his deficiency with respect to facility. M. de Tolozan, too much devoted to the Chancellor to venture to oppose him openly, had but one apprehension, which was, that the brilliant situation offered him would not be lasting. He fortunately had a friend, whose name was M. de la Courée, a Counsellor of merit, whom he consulted. This man dissuaded him, insisted upon it that he should decline; and, lest M. de Maupeou, by his seducing language, should gain him over a second time, he took him away into the country, where this Master of Requests pretended illness, till the importunity was passed, by the appointment of other Solicitors General. M. de Giac, a man of low extraction, as well as his colleague, was the second upon whom the Chancellor depended; he availed himself of the example given him by his superior in office, to excuse himself, and M. de Maupeou was obliged to appoint two persons taken from the Magistrates of other Courts.

This great work of the Chancellor could not be finished in less than several months, and still in an imperfect manner. When he had collected members enough to establish his phantom of a Parliament, he caused a Bed of Justice to be holden, at
 19 April. which none of the Princes assisted, except the children of France, and the Count de la Marche; which made the King say to the latter, when he saw him, *You are welcome; we shall have none of our relations here.* The Count de la Marche knew this before his Majesty; the other Princes of the Blood,
 after

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after having in vain exerted the greatest efforts to keep him away, had entered a protest against every thing that should pass there, and had again sent to his Highness at midnight, to press him to accede to it. At this Bed of Justice, the last and most memorable, that is to say, the most disastrous in the reign of Lewis XV. three edicts were read: the first, for the dissolution of the present Parliament; the second, for the suppression of the Court of Aids; and the third, for the transformation of the Grand Council into a new Parliament. The King closed the sitting with this short speech:

“ You have just heard my intentions; it is my will that they should be executed. I command you to begin your functions next Monday: my Chancellor will go to install you. I forbid all deliberations contrary to my will, and all representations in favour of the antient Parliament; for I will never change.”

His Majesty pronounced these last words, and especially the word *never*, with an energy which impressed terror in the whole assembly. This was a subtle contrivance of the Chancellor's, who, aware of the little dependence there was to be placed upon the resolutions of his Master, was desirous of tying him down by this authentic assurance. Accordingly, several Peers could not credit it; among others, the Duke de Nivernois, one of the thirteen protesters against this infraction of the constitutional laws of the monarchy, and one who had joined in the protest of the Princes. Madame Dubarri having met him soon after the Bed of Justice, stopped him, and said, *It is to be hoped, Monsieur le Duc, that you will give up your opposition; for you have heard*

1771. *it ; the King has said that he would NEVER change—*
Yes, Madam, answered he artfully, *but he was looking at you.*

That very evening the Chancellor went for the third time to the *Palais*, to install the new Parliament. All Paris was upon the road of Versailles, eager to see those Magistrates, whose ignominy seemed to characterise their new-born dignity. M. Lambert alone, Dean of the Grand Council, returning from Versailles, where he had learnt, for the first time, the part he was intended to act, had the courage to withdraw himself from the yoke, and to go to his own house, instead of going to the Sessions ; and having afterwards received a letter *de Cachet*, which ordered him to join his brethren, he only sat upon the *Flowers-de-luce*, to protest more authentically against his appearance, and to reproach the other members with their meanness ; which drew some of them away : but the majority had the effrontery to remain, and this was sufficient for the moment. This tribunal was very precarious : almost abandoned by the members of the former, they had neither Advocates, Attornies, nor Pleaders. Exposed to jokes, to derision, to witticisms, and to scurrilous pamphlets, they were besides condemned by the Parliaments, which accumulated upon the members contemptuous decrees, calling them *intruders, perjured, violators* of their oaths *, and which previously declared all acts issued from them void and of no effect. So many contradictions could not disconcert M. de Maupéou. He knew that

* Expressions of the decree of the Parliament of Rouen, of the 15th April 1771.

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authority which perseveres, which knows how to dispense caresses and threats, rewards and punishments, with propriety, is certain of prevailing, in a country, the baseness, abject condition, and corruption of which he was acquainted with. His only care was, to maintain Lewis XV. in the dispositions he had instilled into him; to preserve the power his Majesty had intrusted him with; and to encourage him to strike with expedition all the blows that were necessary to obtain his end. For this purpose, he kept up a strict connexion with the Duke d'Aiguillon and the Countess Dubarri; and it was at those suppers which the latter gave to her illustrious lover, that she continued to make him sign several orders that were wanted, and which his pusillanimous or benevolent mind would, perhaps, have refused, had his head been cool. Sometimes he was intimidated by the example of Charles I. whose picture the favourite had bought. She used to lead him up to this picture; "Behold that unfortunate Monarch," said she to him; "Your Parliaments would, perhaps, have ended by treating you as he was treated by the Parliament of England, if you had not had a Minister intrepid enough to oppose their enterprizes, and set their menaces at defiance."

By these, or similar means, all more or less mean, but multiplied and varied *ad infinitum*, and proportioned to persons, places, times, and circumstances, the Chancellor arrogated to himself the most dangerous portion of the sovereign power, and was assimilated to the antient *Maires du Palais**. The letters *de*

* See a pamphlet of the time, intitled, *Le Maire du Palais*.

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Cachet were issued, the prisons opened, the military and the Commandants of the provinces marched at his pleasure; and, if no blood was spilt upon the scaffolds, it was because there was no patriot to be found sufficiently firm to deserve it. All the individuals in the subaltern Magistracy, who did not obey the orders of M. de Maupeou with proper readiness, were oppressed, or deprived of their offices; all those who wrote against his operations, or who publicly censured them, were thrown into prison. If any of the foreign gazettes took that liberty, the introduction of them was forbidden. On the contrary, he made himself be extolled in the other newspapers, which he kept in pay at a very great expence. Even the Gazette of France, so famous for its veracity, was become the organ of falshood and calumny. At least, by his artful advertisements, in which truth and fiction were blended, he diffused with rapidity the news he wished to have credited, and kept up the illusion which it was his interest to produce, in order to determine that multitude of men, who are only influenced by example, and to obtain his various purposes.

The remainder of the year passed in the destruction of the several corps, which he suppressed, and restored again as he had occasion for them, by composing them of persons who were devoted to him. Thus it is, that the several Parliaments of the provinces, after having struggled some time against that which was to be assimilated to them, were alternately annihilated and revived. Then it was that we saw resuming their seats upon those same flowers-de-luce, Magistrates who had lately covered with indelible infamy those who should dare to introduce themselves

themselves in that assembly, by a similar act of baseness. A whole body from among them, forgetting their pride, from a sovereign court, which they previously were, consented to be nothing more than a subaltern tribunal, and all the Magistracy of the kingdom, renewed at Martinmas, was no longer composed of any thing else but intruders or schismatics.

M. de Maupeou, in this circumstance, effected more than the Regent in a similar case had ventured to flatter himself with; who agreed, that *he had the power to make the lawyers hold their tongues, but not to make them speak.* The Chancellor carried this point; his new tribunal was soon supplied with a considerable number of lawyers, eloquent orators, and with curious and interesting causes, which drew as numerous an audience as on the brilliant days of the ancient Palais.

The general course of justice being thus re-established, Lewis XV. for the first time, felt the sweets of being his own master, of doing every thing he chose, without opposition, without addresses or remonstrances, and of seeing himself no more beset with red or black gowns, which had been incessantly tormenting him for the space of fifty years. M. de Maupeou secured to him another advantage, of much greater value to his mistress, to his favourites, and to the greedy courtiers, who surrounded the throne with greater importunity than ever. This was, to have registered all the money-edicts, which the spirit of finance could invent, and to increase and extend them at pleasure. The Chancellor in this operation had burdened the public treasury with a debt of four-

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teen or fifteen millions*, which he had disposed of to seduce and corrupt, but especially to pay the multitude of informers and spies he had at his wages. He had loaded the State with about a hundred millions† to be reimbursed, or with an interest of five millions‡ per annum. It was necessary to provide for this increase of expences, and to reward all those famished members, of which he had composed his newly-instituted tribunals. In order that justice should be administered without expence, the land-tax was increased in all the provinces, which thus bought this pretended benefit at a very dear rate. *A Dixieme* was settled upon the perpetual annuities, and a *Quinzieme* upon life annuities: the marc of gold was doubled, tripled, and quadrupled; one per cent. was fixed upon all employments under Government; the Nobility who had acquired their patents were obliged to pay for them a second time; and the sours laid upon every pound were extended as far as eight. After a peace of six years, the first *Vingtieme* was prolonged indefinitely, and the second for ten years, each of them upon fresh edicts, which gave a free course to the vexations of those who collected these taxes; vexations which hitherto the Parliament had at least put a stop to, and which made these two *Vingtiemes* amount to three or four. In a word, it was sufficient to propose to the Minister of the Finances any method to burthen the nation, that it should be adopted. In the space of one day there were as many as eleven money-edicts brought to the

* About six hundred thousand pounds.

† Upwards of four millions sterling.

‡ Upwards of two hundred thousand pounds.

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Palais; which furnished an opportunity of declaring with reason, in a publication at the time, that Lewis XV. had singly imposed a greater number of taxes than all his sixty-five predecessors together†. There was no longer any thing sacred; not only all private property was attacked, but public deposits were also plundered with impunity. The capitations of the provinces were violated. Normandy, reduced to two superior Councils, had seen without commotion the right of having a Parliament in the province taken from her. The States of Britany were threatened to be suppressed, if they were not obedient to the will of the Court, and they became tractable. The liberty of the citizens was not more respected. Near seven hundred Magistrates were banished, the prisons were glutted with captives, the Princes of the Blood were disgraced, and kept at a distance from the Court. Such was the state of the kingdom, which the general insensibility rendered more desperate, because it prevented any remedy from being foreseen. France had undoubtedly experienced paroxysms infinitely more violent, but had never been plunged into so profound and stupid a lethargy. Individuals had no energy, and all bodies of men were reduced to silence. The Nobility of a frontier province having assembled to appeal against the infraction of their privileges, a Commissioner, assisted by an officer of the Police, had the boldness to separate the members, to carry off several of them, and arrived safe and unmolested at Paris with the victims. The Chiefs of the nation suffered themselves to be braved with impunity by the author of the revolution; and

† See *Les Correspondances*.

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the first Prince of the Blood was insulted, even in his palace, by a Minister, who, upon coming out, became only the more audacious and impudent. Publications, indeed, and pamphlets, appeared, containing much excellent matter, but which, being neither avowed nor signed by any one, bore no marks of authenticity, and announced rather timidity and consternation, than any other sentiment, in the authors. Two of them only (one of whom wrote in a foreign country) ventured to affix their names; and the nation must not forget to record those defenders, distinguished still more by their zeal than by their high birth. They were Count Lauragais and the Viscount d'Aubusson.

But it was not sufficient for the Chancellor to have put a stop to all remonstrances, to have stifled even the groans and lamentations of the people, and to have lulled the nation while upon the brink of the precipice; it was also necessary to take care that the King should only be surrounded with persons, whose business it was to entertain him in that fatal state of security to which the Chancellor had brought him, and to quiet his anxiety and remorse, ever ready to return. It was in this view that he had formed the Council of members interested in maintaining and confirming the revolution. Since the dismissal of the Duke de Praslin, the marine department had continued vacant; the Duke d'Aiguillon had once been appointed to it, but he had been given to understand, that it was improper for him to enter into office, just at the time when marked out to the public eye by defamatory memorials from the States of Britany, which were still sitting; he could not but increase the ferment and commotions among them; that

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that it was necessary he should wait till he had been once more cleared by the Royal authority, and till then were a little used to view him in a state of innocence, from which he had been far distant for a long time past. The Abbé Terrai had been intrusted in the interim with the administration of this department, and would have been very well pleased to continue it; but he was too much wanted to direct the finances, and was therefore fixed to that department, and M. de Boynes was appointed to that of the navy. This was given him by M. de Maupéou, as a reward for the services he had rendered him in assisting his operations: he was particularly a violent enemy to the Parliaments, very well calculated to harangue in Council, and to invalidate the arguments of any person who should venture to speak in their favour.

9 April.

Two months after this the Duke d'Aiguillon was declared Minister of foreign affairs; this was another excellent acquisition to the anti-Parliamentary party, for there was no apprehension that so implacable an adversary should ever be induced to change his sentiments. The war department had been refused by the Count du Muy, who, unwilling to bend the knee to the idol, looked upon the Court as too corrupt, and the Ministry in particular as too abject for him to be connected with them: he was too virtuous to govern under a Prince surrounded with every kind of vice; and seemed, in a word, to reserve himself by inspiration for a more fortunate period. In default of this Nobleman, who, notwithstanding all his austerity, was in some respects well calculated for the advancement of their system by his religious views, and his connection with the Clergy, so zealous in support of the Chancellor's plans, they contented themselves

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themselves with the Marquis de Monteynard, a weak man, of no great merit in his profession, and very ignorant in every other respect, but who, at least, had neither the abilities nor the resolution to thwart them. They were sure of the Duke de la Vrilliere, who had so many reasons to dread *the Apparitions**, and likewise of M. Bertin, a man of low cunning, whose conduct, when he was Comptroller-General, had announced his inclination to despotism. Finally, the Abbé Terrai, above all, could not but oppose, with his utmost strength, a repeal which would be scarcely less fatal to himself than to M. de Maupeou.

The Chancellor having nothing to fear on the part of the Ministry, was employed in determining, by degrees, the suppressed Magistrates to appear to acquiesce in his operation, by accepting the reimbursement of their expences. He imagined, indeed, that the length of the exile, the inconvenience of the places, and the fear of losing the profits of their offices, would have an effect upon many; he knew that several of them waited only for an example, and caused it to be given by the Chief of the Company. M. d'Aligre, who ought to have held out to the last, was the first to sign his resignation, to receive the reimbursement of his appointment, and to appear at the Chancellor's. The fear of confinement, which the latter threatened him with, avarice, and the desire of participating again in the pleasures of Paris, were the powerful motives which determined him. The Great Bench soon followed his example, and it was not long before the Counsellors imitated them.

* *Revenans*, an expression then used for the Parliaments, as it had before been applied to the Jesuits.

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these naturally drew after them all the Parliaments of the provinces. One circumstance particularly flattered this modern reformer of the judicature; this was to see Marshal Brissac, that knight-errant of a romantic turn, worthy of the times of antient chivalry, become low and mean by dint of ambition, take the oath as Governor of Paris, before the Sieur de Sauvigny, and appear without shame before an illegal tribunal, reprobated by the Princes, by part of the Dukes and Peers, and by the most numerous and most respectable part of the nation. But the defection of the Princes, which happened a year after, was still a much greater triumph to M. de Maupeou.

These Princes were known to be so effeminate and servile, that their protest had been read with astonishment. Not that this composition had given any kind of satisfaction; on the contrary, it was tedious, diffuse, perplexed, full of law terms, and written in a harsh and barbarous stile; and would less have been taken for the expression of the sentiment of the generous Chiefs of a frank and loyal nation, than for the act of chicanery of some subtle lawyer, endeavouring to tie down the client, whose probity he is in doubt of*. It is asserted, that this was the intention of the persons who drew it up; who, taking advantage of this instant of energy in those august personages, had thus confined them as much as they could, in order to make it almost impossible for them to retract; by causing them previously to protest against their own presence in this singular mode of expression; *if our bodies could be thus far constrained*; they would otherwise have suffered them to

* See *English Spy*.

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go, and would even have excited them to repair to the Bed of Justice, and to speak there with the firmness which became them; a proceeding, solemn, authentic, and calculated to direct the several courts of the nation, and to serve them as a center of re-union. The fears of the authors of the protest proved to be well founded, inasmuch as it was attended with no consequences on the part of the Princes. The Parliaments having even written to them, to know whether the printed pamphlet, distributed in their name, was acknowledged by them, they shuffled, and returned only a vague and embarrassed answer; upon which the Court could have no dependence, and consequently could take no vigorous steps.

M. de Maupeou was not ignorant of their character; he was very certain that in time he should detach them from the patriotic party; with this view he first endeavoured to raise their fears, and determined his Majesty to shew his indignation by banishing them. The marriage of the Count of Provence was even celebrated without them. Count Clermont was still alive; he was ill, and unable to go out, so that the conferences had been holden at his house, and the act drawn up there. He had not hitherto been thought capable of such resistance, and of such courage, as the present dangers of the State, and his own situation, required. It was this Prince, however, who, sacrificing what was most dear to him, set the example to others, and especially to the Prince of Condé his nephew, whom he restrained as long as he lived. Count Clermont had received every thing he possessed from the bounties of the King, and had been brought up with his Majesty, who honoured him with a particular friendship. He

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died almost without assistance, deprived of that friendship so far, that Lewis XV. did not deign to make any inquiries after his health. But if he lost the good graces of his master, he was thoroughly indemnified by the good-will of the nation, and by the tears they shed upon his tomb.

After the death of the uncle, M. de Maupeou flattered himself that he could more easily seduce the nephew, knowing him to be ambitious: he knew that the Count d'Artois, the third son of France to be married, had an inclination for *Mademoiselle*, and caused it to be insinuated to him by crafty emissaries, that this was the time to draw near to the Court, and to make an advantage of the passion of the young Prince, before any foreign Princess should be proposed for him. Eighteen months still passed before the negotiation succeeded; but the want of money beginning to be felt, was another powerful motive represented to him, and insisted upon, particularly by the people of the household of his Highness, who were tired of receiving neither money nor favours. At length the Chancellor had the satisfaction to read a letter of submission to the King, written by the Prince of Condé and the Duke of Bourbon. The latter, though married, was yet only a child. The prospect of the blue riband, of which he had been disappointed at an age when the Princes of the blood are decorated with it, was the frivolous bauble which influenced him.

The Dukes of Orleans and Chartres soon followed this example. The first was prompted by a woman of quality, aspiring to the honour of succeeding the first Princess of the blood. Madame de Montesfon had kept this project in view for several years, and
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1772. this was the lady employed by M. de Maupeou, who was so well skilled in availing himself of every mode of corruption. He gave her to understand, that the return of her lover to Court, by her persuasions, would be the best method of acquiring the King's favour, at least of gaining over the Countess Dubarri, who might support her pretensions with his Majesty. The Prince of Conti only remained unshaken; and did not repent of it, inasmuch as by this behaviour he more effectually attracted the attention of the nation, and became their idol. It is asserted, that those abominable verses were composed at Court, in which he was represented with a whip in his hand, chastizing the other Princes, who had degraded and debased themselves, and were become the sport of the Chancellor, and the agents of despotism.

There only remained the protesting Peers, who, from the beginning, had not much alarmed the Chancellor, since he had not even deigned to banish them. The manner in which they had protested; merely by separate writings, deposited in the hands of notaries, from whence they might withdraw them whenever they chose, already announced their pusillanimity. Accordingly, they had always remained at Court, about the King's person, and in the functions of their offices. Some of them only had been deprived of their governments, from the fear that they might not fulfil with sufficient zeal the commissions they might be intrusted with, as being repugnant to their way of thinking. Besides, the ecclesiastical Peers, and the majority of the others, favoured the operation. The Archbishop of Paris had been seen to officiate before the new Parliament, and we have mentioned the Duke de Brissac's appearing

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ing there as a vassal, without a sword, and taking the oath. But neither of them had been installed, or had taken their seats there, so that the title of Court of Peers was still refused to them. The King himself, with his usual inconsistency, shewed no great consideration for this tribunal, which he did not look upon as his own, but as that of M. de Maupeou. This Minister was little concerned at this obstacle; he was sensible that he might avail himself of the same indifference, to induce his master to take a step, which he was watching the proper opportunity to propose. He had other powerful coadjutors in the Royal Family, and Madame Louise was undoubtedly the most active among them.

This Princess, much beloved by her august father—who, after having opposed her retreat for a long time, had at length consented to it—was become the dearer to him on that account. Tired of the wearisomeness of the Court, she had taken the resolution apparently to forsake the world, in order to shine more conspicuously in it; not that she had formed any design of this kind; on the contrary, she really supposed that she was obeying a supernatural vocation, while she was only following the impulse of a restless mind, fatigued and tormented with its own inutility; and the King, who was not aware of this peculiar turn of ambition, seeing nothing more in his daughter than a nun, taken up with the charms of an ascetic life, often visited, and intrusted her with his secret thoughts. The Chancellor was apprized of all the advantage he might reap from this intimacy. By the insinuations of the grave personages who enjoyed the confidence of that Princess, he had wrought upon her ruling passion. She had been given to

1772. understand, that it was for the interest of Heaven that she should favour the work of M. de Maupeou, and that she should put herself at the head of the party, in order to govern the religion of France. So powerful a motive had determined her to accede to these suggestions, which were so conformable to her inclination; and, thinking she could do nothing more agreeable to God, than to concur in the extirpation of the ancient, and in the prosperity of the new Magistracy, she had the total completion of the revolution as much at heart as the author of it. It is asserted, that the latter, the better to impose upon this zealous novice, respecting his religious views, had, by an abominable deceit, invoked the assistance of the Holy Ghost in her presence, by partaking of the most awful of all mysteries; and that from time to time he renewed this hypocritical farce. However this may be, he thus contrived to unite in his favour the powers of heaven and hell, and to insure the concurrence of vice and virtue, of the King's mistress, and of his august daughter. If in the conflict of factions with which the Court of the former was agitated, his was sometimes forced to yield, he had kept a resource in the constant support of the latter, which was assured to him, by all those who surrounded Madame Louise, interested in the raising of his edifice. Certainly with so little delicacy in the means, it was not possible to display greater ability in his conduct. Every circumstance was propitious to the Chancellor; he saw his train increased even by his enemies. The Council was filled with members who had accepted the reimbursement of their places, and the most sanguine patriots began to despair of the public weal; when an event,

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event, which he had no reason so soon to apprehend, overthrew his work and himself. The better to conceive this happiness, let us take a review of what was passing at this period in the several departments; let us see into what a degree of low debauchery Lewis XV. was plunged, and how much neglect and contempt he experienced, as well from foreigners as from his own people.

The capacity of the Duke d'Aiguillon for foreign affairs could not be called in question, and yet it was not without difficulty that he had acquired some consideration in that department. The Courts of Vienna and Madrid saw him with reluctance filling a post to which their wishes were incessantly recalling the Duke de Choiseul. In all probability, had he been in administration, the Emperor would never have taken a part in the division of Poland; an act not less disgraceful to the Sovereigns who accomplished it, than to those who remained the silent and unactive spectators. It is no part of our plan to enter into the detail and discussion of this incredible event; but merely to observe how much the Court of France was become insignificant and despised by other nations; since, without fear of it's resentment, the reciprocally dividing Powers did not begin to communicate their treaty to the former, till after the execution of it.

There had been no Ministers for a long time at Warsaw; where, the Ambassador having more credit than the King, France would only have acted a subaltern part, incompatible with her dignity. Her Ministers in the neighbouring Courts did indeed give indirect intelligence of what was passing, but the Duke d'Aiguillon paid little attention to it;

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whether it were that he could not give credit to a convention so difficult to be brought about, or whether he were convinced that his master, preferring his tranquillity to his glory, would be very well pleased at having escaped the trouble of interfering in a negotiation, which could not possibly be prevented without shewing a degree of firmness to which he was more than ever inadequate. This caused him to be accused of negligence, and injured him in the opinion of Lewis XV.; who, recollecting that he had been the pacifier of Europe, and comparing that exalted character with the abject one he was now made to assume, exclaimed with sorrow: *Alas! if Choiseul had been here, this would not have happened.* This exclamation was only the momentary effort of a mind which formerly had had some share of elevation; and which soon sunk again into its abject state. Lewis XV. forgot, in the arms of his mistress, all the bitterness of this fatal intelligence; and, being reconciled with his Minister by the mediation of Madame Dubarri, did not receive him less graciously the next day.

29 Aug.

The revolution of Stockholm—the account of which is equally foreign to our plan, but which was executed under the auspices of France—made a fortunate diversion, and proved, that under another Monarch, and in less difficult circumstances, the Duke d'Aiguillon might have supported the dignity of the government.

The present King of Sweden, while he was only Prince Royal, came to France precisely at the time of the troubles of the Magistracy. He had been a witness of the corruption and meanness of the Court, as well as of the depredation of the finances, and he had

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had seen the necessity of not suffering the subsidies due to the Monarch his father to remain any longer in arrears. The Ministry for foreign affairs being at that time vacant, he had been obliged to treat immediately with Lewis XV: he had admired at once his sagacity, and his taste for trifles, although he likewise employed himself in amusements of a higher nature. One day, after having conversed with him upon political matters, that Prince gave him a quantity of curious seeds, which he had gathered at Trianon with his royal hands, and commissioned him to make a present of them to the famous Linnæus, who was still alive, first physician to the King of Sweden, and of superior skill in botany. This attention would undoubtedly have made the Prince Royal conceive a high idea of the exercises of Lewis XV. and of his taste for the sciences, if he had not had occasion to observe, from the little consideration his Majesty had for the men of learning in his kingdom, that his only view was to amuse himself and to kill time.

The Prince Royal, in the conversations he had with the King, had sounded him with respect to the revolution he meditated in Sweden, in order to rescue that kingdom from the state of anarchy it was in, and to overthrow and subdue the aristocratic power, by re-establishing in all it's force the antient liberty of the people, and of the Prince, whom the Senate had equally enslaved. He had made the Monarch understand the interest which France had in this, by strengthening her ally, which might be useful to her, in the affairs of the North, in proportion to it's power. When this young Prince ascended the throne, he pursued the execution of his design with

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still greater ardour; the Duke d'Aiguillon had adopted it; the Count de Vergennes, Ambassador from France to that Court, was sent there as a person well calculated, by his experience and by his counsels, to direct the Monarch. Troops were to arrive there with warlike stores, and especially a great deal of money to bribe the Chiefs. The firmness of the young Monarch had supplied the place of all these succours; and, having seized the favourable instant, he had forestalled the appointed period, and in the space of fifty-four hours had cast off the shackles, and re-assumed the reins of empire, in the manner they had been guided by Gustavus Adolphus, and as they had been directed till the year 1680.

The Duke d'Aiguillon, in order to assume some consequence, as soon as the news of the anticipated revolution arrived, had caused the department for foreign affairs to print with dispatch a circumstantial narrative of all that had happened in Sweden, from the 19th to the 21st of August. An infinite number of copies were distributed *gratis*; and he received congratulations upon this event, as if he had been the real author of it; this circumstance reflected a kind of lustre upon his administration, and gained him a degree of influence with the foreign Ambassadors, and especially with that of Spain, who had before refused to transact business with him. His Catholic Majesty, seeing all his hostile projects against the English overthrown, could not but be dissatisfied with him for this, as also for the mortifications he experienced from his rivals; who took advantage of their being certain of the dispositions of the French Monarch, which partook still more of apathy than of peace. The Duke d'Aiguillon, to maintain himself

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self in place, was so well convinced of the necessity of avoiding all altercations with those islanders, that, dreading the practices of the Count de Guignes, his Majesty's Ambassador at London—a creature of the Duke de Choiseul, entirely devoted to his party, and for that reason capable of intriguing and caballing to disturb the harmony that subsisted between the Courts— he favoured the accusation of his Secretary against him, and obliged him to return, to plead his cause in Council against this dependent.

But the circumstance that had particularly flattered the King, and increased the credit of the Duke d'Aiguillon, was the dexterity with which he had engaged the Princes, at their return to Court, to visit the Countess Dubarri, and to pay their respects to her. It must not be imagined, that, in endeavouring to bring about this reconciliation, he had different views from the Chancellor; and that he had thoughts of uniting himself with them, to procure the re-establishment of the Parliament. These insinuations were suggested in some satirical pamphlets of the time, which affected a great deal of consideration for the Duke d'Aiguillon; not that the authors of them had really any faith in his conversion, but it is probable that their policy was to sow the seeds of discord between these two persons, and to excite them reciprocally to destroy each other. In fact, they were not upon good terms; the insinuating and imperious turn of M. de Maupeou could not conciliate itself for a considerable time with that of his rival: who was not long before he thwarted him, and kept him away from the Court of the favourite; but this was only to prevent him from acquiring too much

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sway, and not to destroy his work, which constituted the security and tranquillity of all the Ministers.

Besides, the Duke d'Aiguillon was too implacable an enemy to bring about the return of the Magistrates; for this restoration might be attended with fatal consequences; it would have been the means of reviving the cabal of the Choiseuls, the remains of which, on the contrary, he pursued with animosity. The disgust which the Baron de Breteuil received—who was appointed to the embassy of Vienna, but who could not go, and was succeeded by Prince Lewis—was attributed to the Baron's attachment to that party. The affair of the Bastille, also, took its rise in the spirit of revenge. The necessity of punishing some factious persons, who were endeavouring to foment dissensions in Germany, the seeds of a future war, served for a pretence. A Sieur Dumourier, a young officer full of wit and talents, formerly sent into Poland by M. de Choiseul, was accused of continuing a character with which he was no longer invested. He was arrested at Hambourg, and brought to the Bastille, to which place his correspondents in Paris were also conducted; and, the matter being traced up to Count Broglio, the Duke d'Aiguillon made his Majesty sensible of the necessity of banishing that Nobleman, who was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary to go to meet the future Countess d'Artois. He had asked permission to go as far as Turin, from which the Minister concluded that the Count, a turbulent and active man, wanted to intrigue in that Court against him. An insolent letter which he received from him rendered the affair more serious; and his disgrace was resolved upon.

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The King did not the less admit him to the party of Choisy, to which he had invited him; he had the honour to eat with him, and to make his party at backgammon; and, at his return to Paris, he received a letter from his Majesty, which commanded him to repair to Ruffec. This occasioned the Duke de Choiseul, who was acquainted with all the pretensions of this ambitious man, to say with pleasantry:—*I always knew him to be a weak-headed man, one who does things the wrong way. He has taken the Ministry by the tail!*

The Duke d'Aiguillon would fain have availed himself of his influence to restore his good friends the Jesuits: they had a glimpse of hope; they appeared again with impunity; they were employed by the Bishops in the apostolic labours; the pulpits and confessionals were full of them; they even insinuated themselves in the education of youth, from which they had been expressly excluded; they conducted the journals, and periodical writings, which determine the judgment of the multitude, with respect to compositions, opinions, and events. They were subalterns in the Ministry, and some of them occupied posts even in the Diplomatic body. A general union was again established between them; they corresponded with each other, not only from one end of the kingdom to the other, but from both the extremities of the universe. Unfortunately, the Ministers of France and Spain, at Rome, did not co-operate with this toleration; they pursued the dissolution of the Company with indefatigable ardour, and, taking advantage of the ascendant they had obtained over the Holy Father, they at length extorted that Bull, which policy had made Ganganelli promise

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Such are the principal events which form the picture of the administration of the Duke d'Aiguillon; which would have been tolerably well filled up during the three years of his Ministry, if the reverse did not present to our view the disgraceful measures he employed to maintain himself in power;—if we did not behold in it his mean servility to Madame Dubarri, a servility which he forced the Dutches's wife to concur in;—if he had not lowered his dignity so far, as to suffer himself to be abused by the *roués* * who surrounded the favourite, by all those Dubarris, who were for ever reproaching him with the obligations he had to them, and required, in return, an absolute dependence from him;—if, continuing the same measures he had employed in his government, and being now able to make a more extensive use of them, he had not encouraged spies and informers;—if, violating the secrets of the post of the State, of which his place made him master, he had not carried his infamy so far as to make public, to keep back, and sometimes entirely to suppress letters;—if, by a search as troublesome as it was odious, even into foreign presses, he had not forced truth, which was ready to come forth, to remain in oblivion;—in a word, if, being master of the letters *de Cachet*, he had not multiplied, *ad infinitum*, this abuse of authority, not only against any person who

* Persons fit for the gallows.

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was guilty, but even who was suspected by him. The fall of the Marquis de Monteynard, which he occasioned, and accelerated by means of his protectress, in order to enrich himself with his spoils, was the last stroke of infamy with which the Duke d'Aiguillon was reproached; who, while he was employed in many acts of iniquity, was sensible of the necessity of doing some good, and of acquiring creatures by that means: his department furnished him with few occasions of dispensing favours; he aspired to that of the War, as the best calculated to fulfil his views.

If the Marquis de Monteynard, who was in possession of it, had not shewn the same resolution as the Count du Muy, in refusing to associate with colleagues so much disgraced, he could not, at least, be reproached with any act of infamy, or of intrigue. He had not the least idea of his promotion, when he was taken from his fire-side at Grenoble, and conducted to Versailles: whether it were that this news did not inspire him with any joy, or whether he restrained himself, he received it with so little emotion, that none of the by-standers suspected the event. He was indebted for it to the Prince of Condé, flattered with the idea of creating a Minister, and not doubting, besides, that, from motives of gratitude, the Marquis would enter into his secret views respecting the post of Grand Master of the Ordinance, which he was desirous of having re-established in his favour. The disgrace of the Princes, by delaying the expectations of his Highness, gave the Marquis time to adapt himself to the turn of the Court; and, after having made many promises to his benefactor, and having amused him for a long time,

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time, he could not take the resolution of dismembering his post so much, and kept the whole.

The Prince of Condé himself was secretly prompted by a more artful instigator, the Count de Maillebois, who had at first excited him to point out the Commandant of Dauphiny to his Majesty. He would have mentioned himself, if he had dared, for he had gradually drawn nearer to the Court for some time past. With this view he had insinuated himself with the favourite, being sensible that he never could have so fair an opportunity. The example of the Duke d'Aiguillon encouraged him, but he was not yet sufficiently fixed. The tribunal of the Marshals of France, the remonstrances of which he dreaded, was in higher credit at that time than the Parliament. He therefore first conceived the idea of founding this tribunal, and, by causing a military man, his friend, to be appointed to the Ministry, was in hopes of entering again into employment. If he could attain this first point, having had the precaution to chuse an insignificant man, of confined talents, and little ambition, he foresaw the possibility of supplanting him with ease, and of compassing his design by this oblique and tardy, but more certain method. Accordingly, one of the first operations of the new Secretary for the War department—convinced of the talents of Count Maillebois, and desirous of acknowledging the obligations he had to the late Marshal, his father—was to give him one of the three places of Director General of the army, which he created in order to facilitate his promotion to the Ministry. This attempt was not successful. The Marshals of France assembled upon the matter, and presented a *Memorial to the King,*

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King, which drew from his Majesty an answer little agreeable to them, and much to the advantage of the accused; although it had it's effect, inasmuch as he was removed from his appointment. Soon after, indeed, Count Maillebois obtained the command of the upper Languedoc, and since that time has openly set both his judges and the public at defiance. This was still the consequence of the first attempt, which did no honour to the Minister.

He conducted himself better in other particulars. One of his principal objects was to reduce the expences of his department, carried to an excessive degree under his predecessor. He endeavoured to restore order and emulation among the troops, which were absolutely destroyed under the despotic administration of the former Minister, who, by dismissions and arbitrary appointments, had subverted the harmony of the several corps. He put a stop to, or suppressed, those dangerous innovations of a man of turbulent genius, greedy of fame, and not scrupulous in the means of acquiring it. Desertion was so frequent, that the Duke de Choiseul had established a chain of posts upon the frontiers, which produced an expence of one million two hundred thousand livres * per annum. M. de Monteynard suppressed this establishment, from conviction that good treatment would remedy this evil more effectually than restraint. Besides, he introduced honorary rewards, calculated to preserve a stock of old soldiers, and to form new ones; and a gradual increase of pay, which, at that period, formed only a trifling object of expence, but which might one day become very burthensome; a cir-

* Fifty thousand pounds.

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circumstance he had not sufficiently attended to. His change of the militia into provincial regiments, and his ordonnances respecting those regiments, were very well judged. By forming them nearly upon the plan of the ancient infantry, the number of troops was immediately augmented in time of war; the abuses that had been introduced in raising of men, and completing the regiments, were avoided; the burthen upon the people was diminished; and subjects were preserved for agriculture. Such were the advantages obtained under the administration of the Marquis de Monteynard, either by his own suggestions, or those of his advisers. As he was slow, heavy, and minute in business, he did not make any great progress, which contributed not a little to disgust Lewis XV. and to give his competitors full scope against him; for he was scarce got into office, when there was a talk of dismissing him. The King, however, who saw in him the most honest man among his Ministers, strove for some time against the cabal. *It must happen at last, said he, for I am the only one who supports him.* The Court Martial of the Invalids was the circumstance that increased the storm against the Marquis de Monteynard. His intentions were good and pure; he tried, in the uprightness of his heart, to carry a scrutinizing eye into the enormous and habitual depredations which were practised for some time in the artillery. They had begun under M. de Choiseul, and had considerably increased under favour of the new system adopted in that branch. The Duke's enemies, in hopes of finding some opportunity of inculpating him more seriously, and of completing his destruction, excited the vigilance and the severity of his successor. A

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General officer, jealous of the success of his rivals, of seeing the modern principles prevail over the old customs, and of finding himself reduced to an humiliating state of inaction, gratified his own private resentments, and covered his secret informations under the mask of zeal for his Majesty's service, and for the public good.

From hence arose that Council of War, so irregular, so capricious, and so monstrous in its proceedings; in which ignorance and prejudice prevailed;—all forms were violated;—liberty of defence was prohibited to the accused;—the choice of Advocates was prescribed;—the persons who ventured to say any thing in their favour were banished;—a Court Martial, finally, in which that incredible sentence was passed, which, while it condemned an officer for having prevaricated in his duty—for having had the meanness to favour a robbery upon the King—for having partaken of, and having been connected with the author of, this robbery; yet it did not deprive him of his mark of honour, and left him *the Cross of St. Louis*.

The obstinacy of the Marquis de Monteynard, in supporting this work of iniquity, and in refusing to attend to all the means that were taken to make him acquainted with the truth, made that Minister lose much of his consideration, not only with the corps of artillery, but also with the nation.

His connections with the Chancellor—whose system, conformable to the principles of the military, he had adopted, respecting the passive and absolute obedience due to the will of the Sovereign—were particularly observed at that time, inasmuch as, not being actuated, as his colleagues, with any private spirit of intrigue,

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intrigue, he remained constantly attached to the party he had embraced, and was the only man in this party, when the general ferment was raised in the midst of the Ministry, against M. de Maupeou. Although a dispenser of favours, he had moreover attached but few creatures to himself; he had not had those servile attentions for the Dubarris, which they could have wished, and it is therefore not surprising that he should have fallen.

— Lewis XV. in dismissing this Minister, who was the last he removed, preserved all the singularities and contradictions of his character. He could not, as we have before observed, entertain a doubt of the integrity of the Marquis de Monteynard, of his attachment to his person, or of his desire to acquit himself of the duties of his office in the best manner he could; but the storm the nation was in at that time occasioned the Monarch to stand less in need of honest men, than daring ones, to guide the helm, and to conceal this fatal spectacle from him. On the other hand, he was alarmed at the injustice of dismissing one of his best servants, when he should have encouraged him—of punishing, instead of rewarding him. The virtue of the Minister kept his disgrace for a long time in suspense. Lewis XV. did not dare to signify it to him, and therefore took the resolution to endeavour to disgust him by mortifications. One day the officer having given notice to this Secretary of State to attend the Council—the only way in which a Minister is summoned—and the Marquis de Monteynard having obeyed the summons, his Majesty sent him away in a shameful manner, imputing the fault to the Officer, who was turned out. Another time, the Marquis de Monteynard

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teynard having come to transact business with the King, his Majesty said to him, "What are you come for? To propose to me the government of the Military School for Timbrun; that is done;— a pension of 2,000 crowns* for Madame Chauvelin; granted." While he declared to him, in this manner, the several favours he had determined upon, he took it for granted that they were all in that Minister's portfolio, and dismissed him without suffering him to open it.

Lewis XV. reckoned that his Minister for the war department would be sensible of what was meant by this behaviour; but whether he had a difficulty in resigning his place—or whether, from the consciousness of having nothing to reproach himself with, he could not suppose that his master really wanted to get rid of him, and flattered himself he should regain his credit—he did not understand this language, and remained three whole months in office, without transacting any business with the King. The whole city of Paris resounded with his approaching disgrace; he alone appeared to be ignorant of it. As the season for new-year's gifts was then at hand, the sellers of novelties—who, among the trifling things for the new year, often treat the report of the day in an allegorical manner—contrived some *screens à la Monteynard*; that is to say, which fell down at the slightest touch, and rose up again of themselves; an ingenious allusion to the alternate elevation and fall of this Minister, who, after having been disgraced in all companies for a week together, was restored, and dismissed again. At length, the

* Two hundred and fifty pounds.

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Duke d'Aiguillon, impatient of these alternatives, engaged his protectress so effectually to torment her august lover, that she made him sign the letter *de cachet*, which the Duke de la Vrilliere was immediately commissioned to notify to the Marquis de Monteynard. His people even were in so much expectation of this event, that the Swiss porter, as soon as he saw the Duke, could not avoid saying, "Monseigneur, I fear you are bringing us bad news;" to which the Duke answered, without mystery, "You are in the right." The cruelty of banishing the disgraced Minister had not been exercised; but his Majesty, recollecting that the Marquis de Maffiac had appeared before him on a similar occasion, wished to avoid the same embarrassment; so that the order signified a prohibition to M. de Monteynard to come into his presence. The Duke d'Aiguillon had the modesty, at first, only to have the intermediate filling up of the place given to him, attended with a compliment, which was equivalent to the complete appointment. Lewis XV, in resigning the portfolio to him, before his Courtiers, said, "I intrust you with this; till I find some one more worthy to have it; but I own to you I am nice." He was presently after the acknowledged Minister; and his first audience was more brilliant than any of those the Duke de Choiseul had given in the summit of his glory.

The Secretary of State charged with the Naval department had not, as the Marquis de Monteynard, the advantage of being chosen from the corps committed to his care. He was even very ignorant in this branch, when his Majesty gave him the appointment; but he flattered himself, in imitation of his

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his predecessor, that he should soon become an adept in the business, and that his sagacity would supply the place of knowledge. He conducted himself at first with tolerable circumspection; as a young pupil, he took masters in the several elements of the branch he meant to conduct; he sent for an ancient First Clerk of the new offices over which he presided, and got the better of the dislike which that experienced person had to give him his advice. It is true he soon threw off his leading-strings. M. de Boifnes had a spirit of innovation little consistent with the turn of the person whom he consulted, and who being, by his age and principles, attached to the ordinance of Lewis XIV. the Minister pretended that he was of the old Navy, and confined him to the examination of accounts. He chose, to second him in his projects, a man whose character was analogous to his own. This man was named Boux, an officer in the service of the Company, son to a mechanic of Rochefort, who, by his merit, had been promoted through the several steps, and who had at length entered into the Royal Navy, in the rank of Lieutenant of a ship. This Boux, endowed with natural talents, of a lively imagination, and a mathematical precision in his ideas, spoke with facility, though without learning or education, and though he could not draw up in writing, what appeared very clear in his conversation: he was also versed in the art of ship-building: in a word, he was very well acquainted with the several parts of the navy. It was principally with him that M. de Boifnes laid the first plan of that whimsical ordonnance, so destructive to the formation and the harmony of the several corps, that it occasioned universal dissatis-

1774. faction among them all. The civil branch of the navy, however, though the most ill-treated, being obliged by it's want of power to acquiesce, was the first to conform to it with resignation; on the contrary, the whole time of M. de Boisnes' administration was taken up in endeavouring to bend the stubbornness of the military branch to this plan; which was totally annihilated as soon as he was out of place.

As for the rest, there were certainly some very excellent things in this ordonnance, the author of which had set out upon an admirable principle, which might have been attended with the most fortunate consequences, if the Minister—suffering it to advance to a greater degree of maturity—weighing the arguments for and against it—foreseeing the inconveniences of it, and finding a remedy to them—had not been too precipitate in the execution of it. The most well-judged circumstance in it, and which was the more disagreeable to the officers, because they were sensible of the intent of it, was the separate distribution that was made of them in different ships; which, independent of the general competition, that was destroyed by this means—since no officer was to be promoted but according to his rank in his own ship, and not according to his general rank in the navy—contributed also to eradicate the professional spirit, which had always rendered this corps so refractory and untractable.

M. de Boisnes, from the opposition and contradictions he experienced from the military branch of the navy, was sensible of his error in having subjected the civil department to it, and, by weakening the latter, having increased the insolence of the former.

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former. To restore the equilibrium, he had conceived the idea of strengthening the civil branch, by uniting to it the Port Officers and the Engineers of the navy; and, in order to sap the very foundations of the military branch, to institute a school for naval education, a general nursery, from whence were to be taken all the persons destined for the several departments in the navy, in proportion to their talents. As there were no proofs of nobility required to enter into this school, he would insensibly have annihilated the haughtiness and pride in which the Midshipmen supported one another; which constituted the essence of their situation, and was the source of all the bad qualities they afterwards displayed.

All these good views were spoiled by too much precipitation, the circumstances moreover were not favourable, and that Minister had neither influence nor consistence enough to secure his authority; it would have been a matter of great surprize, if, in the midst of the general confusion prevailing in the kingdom, his department alone had been exempt from it, and had received an improvement, which would have required in it's author the most rigid virtue, united to the greatest talents. All the time, therefore, of M. de Boisnes' administration was consumed in projects, in intestine divisions in the ports, in expensive experiments; and this Minister, neglecting the material part of the navy, which had at least been kept up by his predecessor, left it at the time of his disgrace in the most deplorable state.

If, however, M. de Boisnes could not derive any great lustre from his department, he reckoned that he should succeed better in another dignity, more suitable to his genius, to his disposition, to his taste,

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and to his capacity ; he entertained an inward persuasion that he should one day become Chancellor, or Keeper of the Seals. Though a creature of M. de Maupeou, he would willingly have returned him the ingratitude with which the latter had repaid his benefactor. The Chancellor, although aware of what would happen, had suffered himself to be misled by his vanity, and had committed the same fault as the Duke de Choiseul ; or rather, giving way to the necessity of the moment, he had attended to what was most urgent : it is pretended, that, without such a second, M. de Maupeou could never have extricated himself ; and it was under that very edifice, which M. de Boisnes had concurred in raising, that he hoped to see the author of it crushed, as soon as he withdrew his support from him. His new occupations, which required his whole time, served as a pretence for his neglect. He well knew the impetuosity of M. de Maupeou, and his spirit of dominion ; he knew him to be rash and inconsiderate, and foresaw that he would soon be at variance with the Duke d'Aiguillon, with the Abbé Terrai, and with the favourite ; that the King himself would soon withdraw the little consideration he had for him : but that, while the Ministry wished to get rid of him, they would be very glad to preserve his edifice, which was falling into ruins on all sides ; and that they would not think they could do better than to apply to the person who was the real architect to restore it.

Had it not been for his ambition, which was so unbounded that there was no kind of enormity he was not capable of to satisfy it, M. de Boisnes was not much adapted to the corrupt Court in which he lived.

lived. In the midst of the most dissolute licentiousness, he exhibited the spectacle of a Minister of good morals; he lived like a domestic man in his own family; he was devout, and artfully concealed the passion with which he was devoured under the cloak of religion. The austerity of his character not being able to bend to the futility of the Courtiers, he had endeavoured to support himself with the party of the devotees, of the Clergy, and of Madame Louise, whose general object being the destruction of the Parliaments, and who knowing his invincible hatred to these respectable societies, reposed the greatest confidence in him. The circumstance that rendered him especially agreeable to Lewis XV. was a spirit of despotism which prevailed in his ideas, and in his disposition. He pretended, that every thing was to give way to the Royal authority, which, having once taken a step, ought never to retract, though it should be in the wrong; that, in a word, there was to be only one master, and all the rest were to be slaves. Fortunately, his colleagues, and especially the King, though penetrated with the same maxims, had not the same inflexibility to support them, and to reduce them to a constant and invariable system; for, if the whole Council had been composed of such rigid men, a terrible crisis would have been produced, or the whole nation would have been under the yoke. Besides, private jealousies thwarted this uniformity of system. The Chancellor, being no longer in need of this colleague, and fearing his competition, endeavoured to discredit him in the opinion of the King, not openly, but by such extraordinary means, that it seemed impossible they should be invented, or not founded on apparent facts.

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He pretended that his understanding was weakened, that he was guilty of extravagancies, that he was losing his memory; and he was every instant watching for an opportunity of finding fault with him in the Council before the King, in order to justify his insinuations.

The Abbé Terrai, who now only kept upon good terms with M. de Maupeou from motives of policy, was not displeased to see these two men employed in reciprocally destroying each other; he flattered himself that he should reap the fruits of this animosity, for he had also pretensions to the Chancellorship. It was in these hopes that he sustained the burthen of the finances, insupportable to any man who had entertained the least sentiment of humanity and patriotism. This villain—for posterity will no doubt confirm to him a qualification he has so justly acquired from his cotemporaries—was distinguished from the others which surrounded the Sovereign, by a singular apathy; the others were at least tormented with violent passions, the effects of which cannot be calculated, and from which the most virtuous men are not always exempt. The Abbé Terrai was indifferent either to good or evil; he did the one without inclination, and the other without remorse. Under Henry IV. he might have been a Sully, under Lewis XV. he was a monster: he had all the qualities necessary to succeed in both the extremes; unfortunately, he had only an occasion to display the most detestable of them, and he did it in the highest degree. Intrepid in crimes, he disdained the hypocrisy of the Chancellor, and did not attempt to conceal his character. He was little inclined to love, but from constitution; and displayed the same apathy

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thy in his amorous pursuits, as in every other particular. In his new house, in the street of Notre Dame des Champs, he had a superb bed, the bottom of which was furnished with a picture concealed: on drawing up the curtain, a woman was represented naked, and, to those who were curious of seeing it, he used to say, *Ladies, this is the costume.* He was never governed by any of his mistresses; the Baronesses de la Garde sold the favours of this Minister, rather publicly; he winked at it, because he found it convenient to return her favours in this manner: when he saw that this might do him an injury, and that very dangerous murmurs resulted from it, he caused her to be exiled, and sent her from his house in a very harsh manner. He made no scruple of cohabiting with Madame Dumerval, his illegitimate daughter: this was a delicate morsel he had reserved for himself, and he had had her educated on purpose; he detached himself from her, when she became agreeable to Madame Dubarri, and when it was in agitation to propose her to Lewis XV.

The Abbé Terrai was very little concerned about the complaints of the malecontents. He did not wish that they should be silenced; he used to say, it was fit that those who were flayed should be suffered to cry out. The same sincerity made him acknowledge what he was. The agents of the Clergy representing to him, in a circumstance which concerned their order, that he was committing an injustice, he answered, *Who tells you that it is just? Do you expect any thing else from me?* Another time, when one of them, being violently piqued, exclaimed, *Why, Monseigneur, this is taking it out of people's pockets,* he replied, *Where else would you have me take it?* He laughed at all the witticisms,

1774. witticisms, epigrams, and pamphlets which were made against him. He was called at Court the *spoilt child*, because he touched every thing, and the *long broom*, because he reached every where : all these nick-names were a matter of sport to him. One day, passing through an oval space filled with Courtiers, he was following one of the Muys, for whom the croud had opened with a kind of respect ; but the pressure afterwards increasing, the Abbé found himself violently squeezed ; and, humbly asking that he might be suffered to pass, and that they would not stifle him, he heard a voice which answered, *We make room here only for honest people* ; an answer, which when his person was safe, gave him no kind of disturbance. His only care was to find money, in order that he might not be dismissed, and, as he was not nice in expedients, he had little difficulty. While he maintained himself in his place, and even extended it, (for, without being fond of either the arts or the sciences, he had taken from the Marquis de Marigny the post of Director of the buildings) he waited till he had a favourable opportunity to resign his department for one that was better ; in order even to hasten this moment, he had thought of being made Cardinal, and the report was spread, that he had bought of the Pretender the nomination to the hat for five hundred thousand livres *. With this dignity he could not have been suffered to remain a Comptroller, and it would have been necessary to revive for him the post of Superintendant, as he would then have been raised above all the other Ministers. Till this brilliant prospect was realized, he was con-

* Upwards of twenty thousand pounds.

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tinually issuing money edicts; and on the day of the death of Lewis XV. a declaration was posted up in the park of Versailles, signifying the continuation of the new taxes. This declaration had been published a little before, or even while the Monarch was breathing his last, with the following inscription: *C'est ainsi qu'en partant, je vous fais mes adieux**.

One of the most extraordinary phænomenons of the reign of Lewis XV. is undoubtedly to see the Duke de la Vrilliere remain in office during more than fifty years, and, amidst that croud of Ministers his brethren, alternately disgraced, to behold him alone resisting all the storms. The reason of this is, that in the beginning he excited little envy, either by his talents or by the nature of his department; and that even his want of genius was the circumstance the most pleasing to his master, ever upon his guard against those, who, having too great a share of it, might assume a superiority over him. In this idea he devoted himself with confidence to this Secretary of State; he found himself upon a level with him, and the result of this was a singular affection on the part of the King, who in reality was a man of habit, who detested change, and, notwithstanding the continual variations in his Council, from his natural timidity, which he never got rid of, was afraid of new faces. Moreover, great qualities were little necessary in that part of administration which the Duke de la Vrilliere was for a long time intrusted with; he possessed, indeed, the most essential of them, the spirit of order, regularity, and dispatch. These, indeed, were the qualities which Lewis XV. had in particu-

* Thus I depart, and take my last farewell.

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It was too late for the Monarch to be able to dissolve the ties which attached him to this Minister; he gave him more special marks of favour and friendship. When the Duke de la Vrilliere had one hand carried off while he was shooting, Lewis XV. wrote to him a very affectionate letter, and when he saw him again, said, *You have only lost one hand, and you shall always find two in me at your service.* In latter times, when the malignity of the Courtiers, excited on the subject of this Minister, was mysteriously spreading reports of his disgrace, and of his retirement, his master removed his apprehensions by saying, *You must not leave me; you are in too much need of me, and I of you* *.

* These anecdotes are taken from the *Eloge of the Duke de la Vrilliere*, pronounced at the Academy of Belles Lettres, at the opening of the public session of *la Saint Martin*, 14th of November, 1777.

These reports gained credit at the time of the exile of the Chevalier d'Arc, favourite of the Marchioness de Langeac, mistress of the Duke, to whose intimacy she had introduced this intriguing person; under his auspices he committed all kinds of secret extortions, which were at last brought to light; but the Duke got rid of the matter by sacrificing him, in dispatching a letter *de cachet* against him, which jealousy alone ought to have made him give much sooner, though he signed it with tears, convinced of the affliction it would cause to his unfaithful mistress.

Such was the foible of the Minister for this woman, that, notwithstanding the illness of Lewis XV. he gave an entertainment in his hotel, on account of the marriage of her daughter with the Marquis de Champbonas; an indecency so extraordinary, that the Dauphin, not believing it, was desirous of being convinced of it privately, by ocular demonstration; and we may easily conceive, that if he had been actuated only by the contempt he felt for the Duke de la Vrilliere, that Nobleman would have been the first he would have expelled on his accession to the throne.

The Minister most agreeable to the King, after the Duke de la Vrilliere, was M. Bertin, and for the same reason, because his understanding was upon a par with that of his Majesty; he found himself perfectly at ease with this Minister, who did not display too many talents, and did not, if we may be allowed the expression, keep him in a ve by too profound or too refined a policy; in a word, who was a plain man, simple in his ideas, and his opinions in Council; for Lewis XV. had learnt, at the school of Cardinal Fleuri, to set more value upon good sense than upon genius.

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genius. This was the circumstance upon which was founded M. Bertin's intimacy with Lewis XV.; who, as we have said, had intrusted him with his *Portfolio*, and the keeping of his effects; he had also the care of several natural daughters of the King, brought up at the convent of the *Presentation*, and whom his Majesty intended to marry as they arrived at the proper age. His communication with the King upon all kinds of domestic matters, gave him equally an opportunity of being much connected with the Countess Dubarri; which circumstance authorized him, as much as M. de Boifnes, and the Abbé Terrai, to aspire to the spoils of the Chancellor: for the objects of his public administration were trifling, and he could not make himself conspicuous in it, either by any considerable faults or by any glorious enterprises.

France, however, is indebted to him for the establishment of the *Ecole Vétérinaire*. This is an anatomical school, to inquire into the structure of the horse, the diseases to which this animal may be subject, the nature of the accidents to which it is liable, with respect to the rank it holds in the class of animals, and to the nature of its services. He may be considered as the founder of the chief place of this establishment, at the castle of Alford, near Paris. He had put at the head of it one M. Bourgelat, a riding-master of Lyons, much celebrated for his knowledge: a number of scholars from the different provinces of the kingdom, and even of foreign countries, are received and boarded there for a very moderate sum; individuals, who have horses either sick or lame, may also send them there at an easy rate, till they are perfectly cured. The progress of the experiments made in

this

this school since it's origin are extended, multiplied, and improved without intermission. When a horse breaks his leg, a kind of accident for which there was formerly no remedy, it is now frequently set to rights here: in a word, the horses are submitted to almost all the surgical operations practised upon man. It is evident that such a school must produce excellent farriers; and the importance of this class of men, since the use of horses is so frequent and so necessary, must give a proportionate idea of the institution.

M. Bertin had besides in his department several considerable provinces, such as Guyenne and Normandy, which placed him in a conspicuous light at the time of the revolution of the Magistracy; a last epocha, so important at the end of the reign of Lewis XV. and which for the space of four years had absorbed almost the whole attention of the Ministry and of the public.

Although the character of M. Bertin did not sympathise with that of M. Maupeou, he had, however, assisted in his work to the best of his abilities; not only in compliance with the general views of his colleagues, but also from some private views of his own, the success of which he was very desirous of. Being a creature of the Jesuits, he had always remained attached to them, and it was not owing to him, if they did not take more advantage of the circumstances; but his friendship partook of the weakness of his character, and he was neither capable of being a warm partizan or a formidable enemy.

He conducted himself in other matters with the same pusillanimity; though convinced of the mischief he was doing, he did not the less give into every
fatal

1774. fatal measure his post required, and endeavoured only to soften matters as much as he could, without exposing himself to any risques; in these times of horrors and abominations he acquired some credit for not having been so flagitious as the rest: but this will not exculpate him in the more severe judgment of posterity.

These several members of Administration were, properly speaking, nothing more than the dispensers of favours, according to the inclinations of the favourite: in a short time she had acquired an ascendancy greater than any of those who had preceded her; and the sceptre of Lewis XV.—hitherto alternately the plaything of Love, Ambition, or Avarice—became, in the hands of the Countess, the bauble of Folly. Could any thing, indeed, be more extravagant than the frivolous actions then passing at Court; than those private scenes between the two lovers, still too public, since they were revealed by indiscreet spectators? Upon hearing a multiplicity of anecdotes related, with which the societies of Paris were enlivened, one might have imagined, that the extravagances of the palace of Caligula were reproduced under a different costume. At one time, it was Madame Dubarri, who, rising from her bed, in presence of the King and a Notary, made the Pope's Nuncio give her one of her slippers, and the Grand Almoner the other; while these two Prelates thought themselves amply indemnified for this mean and ridiculous employment, by casting a fugitive glance upon the charms of this beauty. Another time, it was the Marchioness de Rosés, a Lady attending on the Countess de Provence, who was whipped by the women of the favourite,

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favourite, in her presence, under pretence that the King, making an excuse for her on the score of her youth, with respect to some fault committed by her, had said in jest, *Pshaw! she is but a child fit to be whipped*; after which ceremony, those two madcaps embraced each other, and grew more intimate than ever. It was by an adulation still more contemptible, that the Duke de Tresmes, not finding the favourite at home, wrote upon her door, *The Mar-mozet of the Countess Dubarri is come to pay his homage to her, and to make her laugh*; because she used to divert herself with this Nobleman's deformity, and that he thought himself too fortunate to be the object of her ridicule. Add to this, M. de Boisnes' granting the Cross of St. Louis to a Com-missary of the navy, in acknowledgment for a Paroquet he had made a present of to the Countess. Further, what a ridiculous indecency it was to see Madame Dubarri tap the Duke of Orleans upon his belly, when he came to solicit her to favour his marriage with Madame de Montesson, and to engage the King to acknowledge her as Dutcheß of Orleans, and at the same time say to him, *Marry her nevertheless*, GROS PERE, *we will see what we can do for you afterwards; you are sensible that I am strongly interested in the matter*; as if she had not de-spaired one day of treading in the steps of Madame de Maintenon.

Nothing, undoubtedly, could equal the servility of Lewis XV. who, participating the favours of this Lady with her little Negro, created, in order to please her, Zamore Governor of the castle of Lu-cienne, with an appointment of six hundred livres*,

* Twenty-five pounds.

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and made the Chancellor seal the grant of it for him; who, suffering his mistress to rank him with his footmen, had received the name of *la France* from her, and used to laugh at it, in his little apartments, where he frequently delighted in making his own breakfast. What man in the kingdom has not hear'd the exclamation of Madame Dubarri, while she was in bed, to the King, who, preparing his coffee, had his attention engaged with some other object: *Hoa, la France! take care! your coffee runs over at a d—l of a rate!*

It was this very woman, so abandoned, so gross, and so disgusting in domestic life, who gave audience to the Ambassadors; who saw herself surrounded by the Deputies of the Confederates, and by those of all the petty principalities in Germany, trembling for their destiny, at the time of the division of Poland, and soliciting her interest with the King for their support. It was this same woman whom Lewis XV. carried in triumph to see the ceremony of the clearing of the arches of the bridge of Neuilly; a sight from which the Princesses, and even the Dauphiness, were excluded, in order that she might not be eclipsed. It was this same woman who had raised the anger of Lewis XV.—on account of the presumptive heir of the throne having kept her from the society of his august consort, in a supper of reconciliation contrived by an intriguing woman of the Court—to such a degree, that he signified his displeasure by saying, *I see my children do not love me!* It was this same woman for whom a toilet of gold was preparing, although the Dauphiness had not one, and the Queen never had had any; the looking-glass especially was remarkable,

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in having at the top of it two little Cupids holding a Crown suspended over her head, every time she looked in it ; a symbol of that she one day thought herself destined to wear. It was this very woman who, not finding herself sufficiently well lodged in the palace of a Princess of the blood, had caused the new pavilion of *Lucienne* to be constructed ; a toy, the expence of which could not be calculated, because every thing in it was whim, and could have no price, but such as the cupidity of the artist, or the folly of the proprietor, might put upon it. It was this woman, finally, who, upon scraps of paper signed by her, drew whenever she pleased upon the public treasury, for herself and all her adherents ; who herself alone was more expensive than all the preceding mistresses of Lewis XV. ; and whose prodigalities and depredations, notwithstanding the misery of the people, and the public calamities, were increasing to such a degree, that in a few years she would have swallowed up the kingdom, if the death of Lewis XV. had not put a stop to these enormities.

This Monarch, since the marriage of the Count d'Artois, was become more melancholy than usual, and was sensible of the diminution of his strength. The sudden death of the Marquis de Chauvelin, one of his favourites, enjoying a most perfect state of health—the companion of all his parties of debauchery, in one of which he had expired in his presence—had affected him so strongly, that he could not drive it from his thoughts. That of Marshal d'Armentieres, which happened nearly in a similar manner, and who was almost of the same age as the Monarch, had increased his melancholy. Fi-



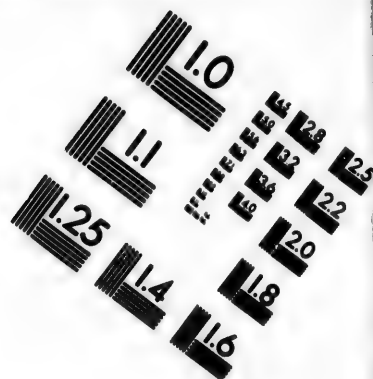
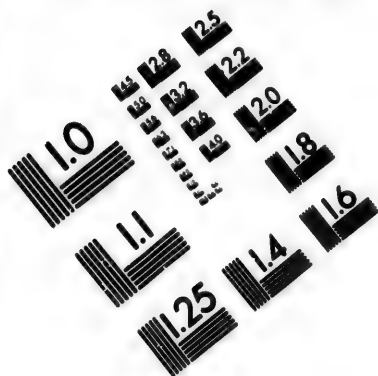
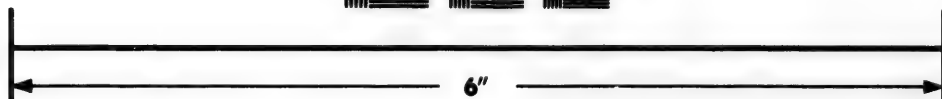
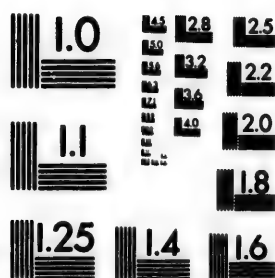


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1774. nally, a sermon preached before him on Maunday Thursday, by the famous Bishop of Senes, had awakened remorse in his heart. This eloquent Prelate recalled to his mind the period of his illness at Metz, the most glorious period of his life, since it was that in which the love of his subjects had been manifested in the highest degree; he did not conceal from him, that this love was diminishing, and that his people, oppressed with subsidies, had now only to lament their own misfortunes. He made the Monarch sensible, that, although on the throne, he undoubtedly had some friends, and was worthy of them; but that his best friend ought to be his people. He concluded with exhorting him, not to trust blindly, in the administration of his kingdom, to the counsels of his Ministers, who were too often interested in deceiving him; but to trust only to himself, to his own heart, and to the experience of more than half a century.

Lewis XV. had not been dissatisfied with this evangelical boldness; he had received the preacher very graciously, and had recalled to his mind the engagement he had taken of preaching before his Majesty in the Lent season of 1776; an engagement, added he, smiling, which he summoned him to fulfil, though a Bishop. Since that time, he had redoubled his visits to Madame Louise; and it is well known that this Princess exerted her utmost efforts to bring him back to God. The corrupt Courtiers were apprehensive lest the same weakness which had rendered him their slave, should render him the slave of the Priests. It was decided, in a committee holden at the favourite's, that it was necessary his Majesty should be awakened from this state,

state, by some powerful temptation, capable of diverting him, and of recalling his former inclinations. He was persuaded to order a journey to Trianon, where a young object was placed in his way, possessed of all the charms of seduction; for Madame Dubarri, for some time past, imitated the example of Madame de Pompadour, and, for various reasons, was incessantly procuring fresh objects to the Monarch. From the consequence of that blind fatality, which makes a mockery of the vain projects of man, and often confounds the greatest wisdom, the very efforts of these corrupters turned against themselves, and France was saved.

The new beauty introduced to the King's bed, had already the seeds of the small-pox concealed within her, which began even to unfold themselves, and rendered her insensible to, and even impatient of, the caresses of the Monarch; who, in the mean time, was perpetually absorbing the pestilential miasmata of this cruel disease. He took to his bed the next day, and the first project of the advisers of the favourite was, to keep his Majesty at Trianon, where he would be under their own management; but the faculty decided otherwise, and the patient was brought back to Versailles in his night-gown.

It was presently known that Lewis XV. had the small-pox, and the news soon reached the extremities of the kingdom. The majority of the people were rejoiced at it; others, considering that his successor was not yet twenty, were alarmed for the consequences.

The Dauphin, however, behaved with a prudence much above his age; his first care was to present

1774. himself at the door of his grandfather's chamber. The King, though he was not told the nature of his disorder, had been persuaded not to suffer the children of France to come near him. The Duke de la Vrilliere declared to the Prince, from his Majesty, that his health was too precious to the State, that it was not his own, and that he ought not to endanger it by entering into his grandfather's apartment, who commanded him to abstain from it. He retired, shut himself up with the Dauphiness, and refused to see the crowd of Courtiers, whose eyes were now turned towards this rising sun.

The whole faculty was called in : but the King had formally excluded Doctor Bouvard, a personal enemy to Doctor Bordeu, Physician to Madame Dubarri, to whom she had engaged her illustrious lover to give his confidence. The nature of etiquette then became evident, and it was seen how much a Monarch, so absolute in doing mischief to his subjects, was restrained with regard to his own preservation : when Lewis XV. was first seized with the small-pox, an English Physician, named Sutton—related to the man famous for his particular method of inoculating, and for a specific against the small-pox—being at Paris, offered his services to treat the patient, and to save him. The faculty would not allow him to come near the King : he was not recalled till Lewis XV. was given over, and then he said it was too late.

From the beginning of the illness, it was proposed to administer the Sacrament to Lewis XV. ; but Doctor Bordeu, knowing how fatal this event would be to his mistress, postponed it as long as he could, and strongly objected to any thing being
said

said to the King; he assured, that there was yet no visible danger, and that a declaration of this kind destroyed three-fourths of the sick people. Madame Dubarri availed herself of this respite, to remain constantly at the bed-side of her lover.

The Clergy, apprehending that the expiring Monarch, would slip out of their hands, were exasperated; they loudly censured the Archbishop of Paris, who had, indeed, repaired to Court at the beginning of this fatal news, but had made no effort to assume an authority over the King's conscience, and had even suffered himself to be excluded from his presence, in a humiliating manner. It was the patient himself, who, being informed by the Sieur de la Martiniere, who never concealed the truth, that he had the small-pox, imposed the penance upon himself; and said, the fifth day of his illness, in the night-time, to those who were about him: *I have no desire to be compelled to renew the same scene as at Metz; let the Dutchesse d'Aiguillon be informed, that she will do me a pleasure in removing the Countess Dubarri.* After this painful separation, the Clergy had no difficulty of succeeding in other respects; Lewis XV. received the Sacraments two days after: previous to which, the Grand Almoner made the following speech on the part of his Majesty:

"Although the King be accountable to none but God for his conduct, he is sorry to have given any occasion of scandal to his subjects; and declares that he will hereafter live only for the maintenance of religion, and for the happiness of his people."

The orator's intention in this discourse was to preserve the dignity of his master, which led him to ad-

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vance an absurdity; a thing contrary even to the maxims of the Clergy; for, admitting even that the King were not accountable for his actions in a political view, yet he certainly is not the less obliged to set the example as a Christian, in a religious light; and this is the more particularly incumbent upon him, as he is in a more exalted station, and therefore restrained by duties of a more rigorous and more conspicuous nature. Such is the doctrine preached every day in our pulpits: but M. de la Roche-Aimon, being one of the most ignorant Prelates in France, and of the most confined talents—which indeed is saying a great deal—spoke with the zeal of a Courtier, and not of an Apostle; he was a greater adept in adulation than in reasoning. Had he done his duty, he would undoubtedly have determined his Majesty to see the Prince of Conti, who was still in disgrace, and would have persuaded him to a reconciliation, the first step required of dying persons.

Lewis XV. lived only three days after the Sacraments had been administered to him; the next day there was a momentary change for the better; this was judged by the conduct of the Courtiers, who in the first instance had hooted the Dubarri's, so as to compel them all to quit Versailles, and to force the young Marchioness of that name, who was obliged by her duty to remain with the Countess d'Artois, at least to alter her livery, that she might appear less conspicuous: their behaviour was now changed, it was a continual procession of coaches from Versailles to Ruelles, where the favourite was, more numerous than that from Paris to Versailles; but they soon retracted, in proportion as the accounts became more desperate.

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The King died on the 10th of May, at twenty minutes after three. The whole Court instantly repaired to Choisy; there only remained with the body the persons necessary to take care of it: the utmost precipitation was used in removing it from the castle; none of the usual formalities were observed, for the greater dispatch; and, as persons of the profession could not be found, intrepid enough to fulfil them, in forty-eight hours time the corpse was carried to St. Denis, with a suite of forty of the body guards, and a few pages attended with lights. The coffin was put in a hunting carriage, and came out at the opening in the front; the escort hurried on the dead man, in the same manner as he had so often hurried them in his life-time. Never was Monarch more speedily conducted. The same indecency prevailed upon the road among the spectators, and at St. Denis: the public-houses were filled with drunkards who were singing, and, if it be a fact, that there is truth in wine, we may easily judge of the sentiments of the people from the speech of one of them:—The landlord wishing to turn this man out of the house, in order to get rid of him, told him that the funeral of Lewis XV. was going to pass by:—*What*, said he, with a licentiousness which shewed plainly the situation he was in, *the r—l has starved us in his life-time, and he is now to destroy us with thirst at his death?*

A bon mot of another kind, attributed to the Abbé de Sainte Genevieve, gives us, in addition to this curse of the populace, the sentiments of the citizens, who reflected more seriously. When this Abbé was jesting with upon the subject of his Saint, and upon the little virtue which the opening of the shrine, formerly so efficacious, had just displayed: “*Well*
“*Gentlemen,*”

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"Gentlemen," answered he, "*what do you complain of?*
"*is he not dead?*"

In a word, the surname of *Louis le désiré**, which was unanimously decreed to his successor, was undoubtedly the most bitter satire that could be made upon the reign of *Louis le bien-aimé*†. Decency did not permit Lewis XVI. to accept this title of anticipated flattery; he rejected it with indignation, jealous, without doubt, of obtaining it more worthily from posterity. *O utinam!*

* *Louis the much-desired.*

† *Louis the well-beloved.*

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The unique character of the American people is the result of the fusion of the various races and nationalities which have contributed to the formation of the American nation. The American people are a people of the future, and their destiny is to be determined by the course which they take in the future. The American people are a people of the future, and their destiny is to be determined by the course which they take in the future.

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APPENDIX.

IX.

APPENDIX

A P P E N D I X.

Secret Expedition, from 1758 to 1759.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following memoir has been communicated to us formerly by a First Clerk of the Navy: this is the information he gave us respecting this singular piece. M. Berryer, then Minister of this department, not knowing what to think of this secret expedition, and of what had passed in it, consulted M. de Lessert, who had embarked in the squadron which was intrusted with it. Though disappointed of the profit he had expected in this voyage, this merchant was the most impartial historian he could have had. He was reckoned a man of understanding, merit, and probity; and, as he had been often at sea, he was sufficiently acquainted with the navy, to draw up an account such as the Minister required. In the perusal of it we see, that this stranger, though more connected with M. Marchis than with the officers, did not conceal the faults and defects of the former.

As for the rest, the anecdote of the slap in the face, and the account of M. Marchis, have been communicated to

us by a man of veracity, whose testimony cannot be suspected.

To conclude what concerns this celebrated adventurer, M. Marchis died among the Malaysans, in a riot, where he was killed.

A Certain number of ships laden with the merchandize of Asia, return every year from India into England. These vessels it was the business to intercept; and it is of the execution of this project that we mean to speak, under the title of *Secret Expedition*.

In 1758 there was a man in Paris much accustomed to the Oriental seas, who, having been long in the service of the Dutch Company, had acquired a tolerably accurate knowledge of the trade of the English in India; he had quitted the Dutch service for some private reasons, and, being born in France, had not lost the sentiments of a good patriot; he had therefore formed the project of carrying off some of the ships spoken of above, for which purpose he wanted some of the King's frigates; and, having gained access to the Government, he made his demand to the person who was then charged with the department of the navy. The Court, always disposed to avail itself of the lights that are imparted, wished to examine the matter thoroughly; the project was amply discussed, and when the Minister was perfect master of it, he found it worthy of being carried into execution for his Majesty: M. Marchis (the name of the speculator) was given to understand, that it would be more glorious for him to undertake such an expedition in the name of the King. The author of the

the project, who had not learnt in Holland the intrigues of the Court of France, was easily prevailed upon; he agreed successively to every thing that was proposed, was flattered with the fair prospect displayed to him, and was only sensible of it's varying, when matters were nearly concluded: at length the veil was removed, when it was too late to retract. The business is now, to examine what his plan was; we shall afterwards see what method was pursued to carry it into execution, and to accelerate the necessary armament; we shall then re-assume our account of the several operations of the campaign, and ingenuously relate by what fatality, or by what series of improper measures, this fine project, so clear, so simple, and to all appearances so certain, has nevertheless failed in the most complete manner.

To succeed in a cruize it is necessary, 1st, to ascertain a fixed point, where the several vessels intended to be intercepted are to be met with. 2dly. One must know that they will be there at a stated period. 3dly. There should be no apprehension that the season, the winds, or the currents should throw the cruising vessels out of their stations. 4thly. One must be able to calculate the forces, more or less numerous, one may have to do with, in order to keep always a superior force. 5thly. In a word, one must at least have one sailing ship, swift enough to come up in a chace with any vessel whatever. The Minister thought he had found all these conditions in the accepted project.

The cruize was at first settled for St. Helen's, as the place where the ships of the English Company, coming from the Indies and China, invariably put in; beside the motives of convenience, they have absolute

solute orders to touch there, to join the ship sent from Europe to convoy them. The war gave no reason to fear that they would alter their route, since they had not done it during the last war, nor in the beginning of this*. It was afterwards demonstrated, that the passage of these vessels began in December at soonest, and ended at latest in May. This assertion was supported by proofs taken from the knowledge of the monsoons, which blow towards the several coasts where the English trade, and especially from the necessity of doubling the Cape of Good Hope, so justly called the Cape of Storms, in the proper season. Besides, this cruize was represented as one of the most favourable that could be made. The winds in that part usually blow from the same quarter, are never violent; the sea is beautiful and calm, the sky pure and unclouded, the climate wholesome and temperate; but the greatest advantage is an almost certain estimation of the longitude, without sight of land, by the knowledge of the several magnetic variations in these latitudes. Neither was there any reason to fear being attacked by an enemy of superior force. It is known that the ships coming from Europe take great care to avoid St. Helen's, and the English were not able to recall any forces from India that year; so that it was only necessary to be able to engage a frigate of 40 guns, which sometimes accompanies these vessels on their return, or a fifty-gun ship coming from England to fetch them. The final result of all these suppositions was, that it being in our

* Besides, the subsistence of the inhabitants of the island depended upon it, for every vessel was obliged to bring there three tons of rice, which they took up in India.

power to send vessels of greater or less force, nothing could prevent us from choosing the best-sailing ships, or even from increasing this advantage by all possible means. What success was there not reason to expect, when it was considered that they were King's ships, which were going to attack merchantmen—that the former would be newly careened, light, and manœuvred with as much rapidity as precision; while the latter would have been fatigued at sea for several months, would be laden up to their very tops, and would have the greatest part of their crews disabled. The project being thus settled, three things were necessary to make it succeed; first, to put the squadron intended for this enterprize in a state of superior strength to the enemy, and to send it early enough not to be exposed to the hazards and impediments which so often make naval expeditions miscarry: secondly, to provide it with every thing necessary for its preservation and subsistence, so as to enable it to begin the cruize as early, and to continue it as long, as circumstances should require: thirdly, as harmony, exactness, and perseverance in the execution, were of themselves sufficient to insure success, the most effectual measures were to be taken to prevent every thing that might excite contrary dispositions between the chiefs and the subalterns. We shall see by the sequel, that this point, especially, was the one in which the policy of the Minister miscarried. Let us now proceed to examine the preparatives. In the month of August 1758, that is to say, when the squadron ought to have set sail, an order was sent to Brest to fit out a 64 gun ship, and two frigates. The more to accelerate the expedition, one ship had been pitched upon which was excellently well adapted to the purpose,

but which was undergoing a considerable repair, and was in no great forwardness: the Court was given to understand, that they had not considered, that it would have been as well to order a ship to be built on purpose; upon which another of 50 guns was substituted to it, acknowledged also to be very good; but the Captain not being satisfied with her, it was necessary to name a third, which was a vessel from Provence *. We have already observed, that two frigates were fitting out. They could only carry provisions for six months, and the Commandant had some only for seven, for a voyage of at least a twelvemonth. This inconvenience might easily have been remedied, by loading a pink at the suite of the squadron; but an easier and less expensive expedient was thought of. It was a point settled, that we should not pass the Madeira islands without having taken several prizes; accordingly, arrangements had been already made to preserve one or several of them for hospital ships, in which the provisions of the others should be put. These hopes ought certainly to have been very well founded, otherwise the expedition was exposed to the risque of failing for a trifling matter, either by wasting, at the first place they should put in at, time which was very precious, in supplying themselves with provisions, or by being disabled, for want of that resource, from cruising as long as it might perhaps be necessary. But the Minister had no consideration more urgent, than the getting rid of us; we are too apt to imagine, in naval affairs, that when once a squadron is sailed, every thing is done. Ours

* *L' Achille* of 64 guns; the two frigates were the *Zephyr*, and the *Syrens*, of 32 guns each.

still remained some time in the road: the crews were increased, but there was no money to pay them. Bills of exchange were sent, which were not yet due. At length an examination was made, and 40,000 livres* were embarked, to supply the want of the pink or the deficiency of the prizes, which were looked upon as sure. This was enough to furnish us with provisions for about six weeks, and with these succours we set sail the 14th of October, with a tolerably favourable wind. The secret of our commission was the circumstance that had been best observed; when we set out, we were sent every where but to the place we were going. Two passengers had been put on board of us *incognito*, which gave rise to many speculations. M. de Massiac was now only anxious upon one point, which was, whether we should escape the English; as for the rest, he had reason to congratulate himself upon having undertaken an enterprize, the success of which would illustrate his administration, however short, as he expected, its duration might be. He depended much upon the Commander of the Squadron † with whom he had been intimate. He was a man of fashion, but poor, and obliged to himself only for his education. Without having ever been at Court, he possessed all the art of the most consummate Courtier; destitute of any protection or support, he had found means, by dint of labour, suppleness, and perseverance, to supplant several of his comrades; inured to fatigue, exact in

* Between one and two thousand pounds.

† M. de Marnieres, Captain of a ship, commanded *P. Achille*; M. de Grasse, Lieutenant, the *Zephyr*; and M. Dumatz, the *Syrène*.

his duty, and fond of his profession, he had for a long while commanded a frigate, in two squadrons, and had always distinguished himself by his vigilance in discovering the enemy, his activity in pursuing them, and his ardour to take them. In a word, he was Cardinal Mazarin's man, he was fortunate. These great qualities rendered him very fit to command the expedition intrusted to him. Of the two Captains of the frigates, one was a friend and relation to the Minister, the other was his nephew; this was their greatest merit. The first, however, passed for being a good subaltern officer. Such were the Chiefs of our expedition. It began happily enough, since it is become a fortunate event for the French, not to be taken upon their going out of their roads: we therefore escaped the English, who were cruising on our coasts, and we avoided, according to the orders of the Court, taking notice of any vessel whatsoever. On the 18th, M. de Marnieres, being at more than 150 leagues off Ushant, opened his packets; and the first result of this was to change our proceeding, and to order our frigates to give chase to every thing they should meet, and to engage, take, or sink the enemy's ships. The very next day we took a small English collier in tow; it seemed a natural thing to burn her, as she could not be of any use to us, but, on the contrary, must of necessity retard us greatly in our course, while every instant of time became daily more precious: this was not done, and it was thought proper to carry this conquest in triumph, and to take her in tow, in order not to lose sight of her. Considering this merely as an object of parade, our knowing sailors had occasion the very next day to presume that we had done

one right, and that we should scarce take any prizes, out of the same nature. Accordingly, as early as six o'clock in the morning, the frigates having noticed two vessels in the south, and S. S. W. instead of remaining with our main-sail, as we were, we trimmed our courses and top-sails, and steered from S. S. E. to S. $\frac{1}{4}$ S. E. near the wind, with the English flag and streamers: the weather having cleared up, the vessel in the south bore down upon us. There was no doubt made of her being a privateer; she was a very pretty built ship, and suited us exactly; we already congratulated ourselves upon this capture, but this was selling the bear's-skin before it was killed: instead of suffering her to engage herself, and of making one of the two frigates tack in order to gain the wind of her, we sailed all three on the starboard tack, while she bore down on the larboard side, tacking to windward of us, the wind being then from S. W. to S. S. W. The *Syrene*, which was foremost, and nearest to the enemy, having placed herself along side the vessel, poured in her broadside, still going forward; the flag was immediately taken down, without firing one single gun; it was presumed that the vessel had struck, and dispositions were made for taking her in tow. How great was our surprize, when we saw the flag hoisted again, and the vessel crowded with sails! this manœuvre was thought scandalous and unfair; we talked of punishing it as it deserved, and proposed ample vengeance to ourselves. She sailed away the more rapidly: we were obliged to tack about, and to let out our reefs, which were also entangled. During this manœuvre, which was far from being executed with precision, the enemy got considerably a-head, steering W. N. W.

and after two hours chase, her superior swiftness still enabling her to maintain her advantage, we tacked about with the regret of having missed our prey. An inquiry was then made by whose fault this had happened. The Commandant laid it to the charge of the Subalterns; and these upon their Chief, while matters in the mean time were not better conducted. From that day we met with none but neutral bottoms, till we arrived as far as the Cape de Verd Islands, where we anchored on the 16th of November. This place was, indeed, the first we were to stop at, according to the orders of the Court; but they were conditional, and the situation in which we were seemed to enable us to proceed.

At our departure from France, we had taken in water for more than one hundred days; a circumstance not known: so that we had still enough remaining for more than fourscore, and this, being well managed, might have lasted ninety, and even an hundred days. Why should we, therefore, amuse ourselves near a week in a state of inactivity entirely useless, and lose a time become more and more precious from all the delays we had experienced? This was the least inconvenience we sustained; and we must now begin to reveal the first seeds of discord, which increased so much in the sequel as to occasion, in a great measure, that series of misfortunes which the squadron underwent. We have already observed, that two passengers had embarked incognito. Who were these two men, and what were they to do? This was at first a problem to the superior Officers. It might have remained so a long time, if the present silence had been observed; but M. de Marnieres had scarce opened his
packets,

packets, than it was known that there was in them a brevet of Captain of a frigate for the campaign granted to the *Sieur Marchis*, author of the project, and one of the two strangers; the other was a merchant of Lisbon*. This was all that had yet transpired; it was not possible that it should be kept a secret; but the circumstance that ought to have been so, was, that in these same packets there was an order from the King which appointed the *Chevalier de Grasse* Commandant of the Squadron, in case of the death of *M. de Marnieres*, and in case they both died, *M. Marchis*. This is the point which gave considerable offence, and that in which the policy of the Ministry was deficient. In fact, no good reception was given to a stranger who only entered into the service of the navy at that very instant, and was upon the eve of commanding three sets of Staff Officers. It would already have been sufficient to see him second Captain; if that quality, which only signifies a man in a ship who has nothing to do, had not comforted them for this superiority. Besides, *M. de Marnieres* had done all he could to elude acknowledging him in that rank, and even this acknowledgment had been made with so little form, that, properly speaking, he was nothing more than a mere passenger, who is treated with some degree of consideration. He did not even enjoy his lodging; and the Commandant, in bestowing every mark of vain politeness upon him, had insensibly

* *M. de Lessert*, a French merchant settled at Lisbon; his commission, as being acquainted with the country, was to direct the sale of the merchandize of the vessels that were taken, and to procure an advantageous disposal of them.

taken from him all the little privileges which might have excited the least jealousy even in the youngest of the Officers. This conduct, irregular as it was, would undoubtedly have succeeded, if the morose and proud disposition of M. Marchis could have agreed with the artful and supple character of M. de Marnieres; the latter derived no other advantage from his artifices, than to involve himself every instant in fresh difficulties, from which he extricated himself worse and worse, because authority, when once called in question, never recovers it's first vigour, and always continues decreasing.

As M. Marchis was to have the conduct of the expedition, it was enjoined to M. de Marnieres, in his instructions, to undertake nothing without having the opinion of this stranger, even in writing. His commission was especially to begin at the departure from the Cape de Verd Islands, because, the crossing of the Line being considered as the most difficult manœuvre, and of the greatest consequence, it was necessary to be guided by an experienced pilot: this was the decisive moment. The Commandant might still invest M. Marchis, his adviser, with all the distinctions with which it had pleased the King to honour him, make the Officers sensible of how much weight he was to be in the expedition, and keep them in such awe that they would infallibly be in proper subordination, and, if they should swerve from it, impress them with the idea of displeasing the Court, and of contributing to the misfortunes of an expedition, the apparatus and the secrecy of which kept France in singular expectation. The vanity of M. de Marnieres, and his little
steadiness,

steadiness, not permitting him to take that step, he did not even, in default of that steadiness, adopt the conduct that appeared the most natural. Any other man would have ventured every thing; he would have declared to M. Marchis, that his interference was considered as useless, even as disgraceful; and that one could very well do without him. The Commandant was far from making such a declaration; he trusted to his policy, and thought that by dint of artifice he should at the same time spare his own vanity, that of the stranger, and even that of the subalterns. He therefore took the advice of M. Marchis only in private, and retailed the orders afterwards as coming from himself. The campaign would have passed very well in this manner, if this manœuvre had lasted; but the stranger and the subalterns perceiving it, were equally dissatisfied with M. de Marnieres. The former affected to give his advice publicly, and the latter to execute nothing that came through that channel; this obliged M. de Marnieres to be perpetually devising expedients to palliate, to calm, and to soften; but he did not succeed on any side; his people were alienated from him, and M. Marchis was reconciled to him merely from motives of policy; his advice was only asked when it was unavoidable; and he opened himself only as far as his duty and his conscience required; he entertained a deep resentment of the little attention paid either to his person or advice; he found himself shamefully abused, and could not avoid, from time to time, letting his dissatisfaction appear. He in vain attempted, several times, to seize a portion of the authority which belonged to him;

him; the only result of it was fresh animosity; and the antipathy rose to such a height, that, when we arrived at the Cape of Good Hope, all the Staff Officers, except the Captain, refused to speak to him. Notwithstanding all these divisions, Providence, no doubt, watching over us, our crossing the Line was happy; we had done it at a point and in a moment that was favourable; our voyage had lasted but fifty-five days.

It was in this road of the Cape of Good Hope that the animosities, which till then had been only concealed, broke out: several circumstances concurred in making the discord public. At first, the Gentlemen of the navy had only for the intruder that general contempt which they make it a rule to have for every one who does not belong to their corps; but young men, without experience or talents, could not avoid being much kept in awe by the capacity of a man who had navigated in India, and in the South Seas; who had visited the several Dutch and English factories; who had commanded fleets and squadrons for the States General; who, in a word, declared himself to be invested with the highest dignities in their service. M. Marchis made the greater parade of all these circumstances, as he was sensible of what importance it was to place himself in a conspicuous light; unfortunately, he was not artful enough to improve these advantages, instead of being reserved in his communications, of assuming an appearance of modesty, of keeping all prying persons at a distance, and answering only like an oracle, in short and ambiguous terms, he affected less to display the knowledge of a traveller, than

than the desire of imposing upon credulity; he fell into contradictions, and, by wanting to appear an extraordinary man, he was found inferior to an ordinary one. He manifested his character thoroughly, which was a low and puerile vanity, an insupportable self-love: the contempt in which his person was holden, being no more balanced by the high opinion of his knowledge, was even transferred to his merit: prognostics, which he hazarded concerning our navigation, and assertions respecting the winds and the currents, which were not confirmed by experience, made him fall into total discredit, and he was no longer considered but as an ignorant man, and an impostor. On our arrival at the Cape, he was the person commissioned to anchor us in that road; and it must be acknowledged, that, whether from timidity or forgetfulness of the situation, he did not shine upon that occasion. The Subalterns very readily took notice of his embarrassment, and availed themselves of it against him; but the circumstance which made the division break out in the most striking manner, was the imprudence M. Marchis was guilty of, in putting on the naval uniform: this vanity was looked upon as an unpardonable insolence; indignation was carried so far, as to induce them to forget the King's orders, the authority of the Commandant, and even all proceedings of humanity; this occasioned the less concern, as the popular reports that were circulated to his disadvantage in the city *, were received with

* We shall be informed what those reports were, by a short account of the life of M. Marchis, communicated to us by an officer very well acquainted with him in India: it is too long to be inserted in a note.

avidity;

avidity; he was readily believed to be an infamous villain, an impostor, who had deceived the Court, because it was wished he should prove so. M. de Marnieres himself gave into the division, and authentically deprived him of all the prerogatives of his place; which he had solemnly promised to make him enjoy, and which he had even owned; that he could not deprive him of without prevaricating essentially. This stroke disconcerted the arrogance of M. Marchis; he gave up all the prospects of honours and dignities he had flattered himself with: he presented a memorial to M. de Marnieres, wherein he summoned him to declare categorically, whether he considered him as useless in the execution of the commission; in which case he intreated him to suffer him to return to Europe; or to punish him, if guilty, and that he thought him still necessary; or, in a word, if he were useful and innocent, to suffer him to enjoy the rights of his place. M. de Marnieres was not a man to act a decisive part with respect to these proposals. He could not but acknowledge the goodness of the project, of which several experienced officers of the Company assured him; on the other hand, he wanted some person to be answerable for the failure of it, if it did not succeed: he was therefore far from giving M. Marchis the liberty of departing, as useless, or from punishing him as guilty; but he did not restore him to the functions which he claimed; he shuffled, he eluded, he gained time; and we left the Cape without either of them knowing what they had to depend upon, and what their intentions were.

At

At length, on the 17th of February, in the morning, we set sail ; every one was attentive to the manœuvres going forwards, and at that instant a secret was to be brought to light, which had excited the curiosity of the whole squadron for several months; when it was seen that we were returning the same way we came, it was no longer doubted that we were going to cruize off St. Helen's : this project could not be censured, because it was approved by all the able sailors of the Cape. The merit of the invention only was depreciated ; the form and the execution of it was criticized, and it was said, that it was undertaken too late ; it was known for a certainty, that no other ships than those from China were to pass that year. These reproaches could not fall upon M. Marchis ; he, on the contrary, retaliated with more reason, and found fault with the several manœuvres ; he complained, that his advice was asked and not followed : but, notwithstanding all these obstacles, we perceived St. Helen's on the fifth of March.

We cruized till the 4th of May, without falling in with any but neutral vessels, which assured us we should infallibly meet with the ships from China that were not yet passed, and perhaps with others. This intelligence was very displeasing to the officers, who, preferring the gratification of their jealousy to their interest, were desirous that the project should miscarry, not only in the execution, but even in the speculation ; and exerted their utmost endeavours to effect this. The author of it was more and more looked upon as a cypher, he was not consulted upon any thing ; or, if M. de Marnieres did sometimes

times ask his advice, it was with a design to follow it in an improper manner. M. Marchis had observed at first, that, in order to reconnoitre the land, we had been too near it, and had run the risque of being discovered by the enemy; and afterwards, that we had got too far from it, keeping ourselves sometimes at more than 50 leagues distance from it, so that ships might easily land between us and the island *. He reasoned upon this objection like an experienced sailor. In fact, said he, although it be the custom of the English returning from India, either to keep in the latitude of St. Helen's, about 80 leagues distant, as it is only according to their estimate; it is very possible that there may be an error of 30 or 40 leagues in their calculation, especially after so long a voyage: he also observed that the frigates sometimes parted company: in a word, he saw nothing but indolence, negligence, want of precision, and pitiful manœuvres, and especially improper dispositions, prevailing in the cruize, the principal success of which was to depend upon the vigilance, the attention, and the zeal with which it should have been pursued.

* This conjecture was verified by the interception of the *Swift*, a sloop coming from St. Helen's to cruize in the way of the ships expected from China and India, which had declared, that a vessel from Europe had put in on the 12th of March, laden with money for the island, and had departed immediately for Bencoolen, without our having known any thing of the matter. The precaution taken on this occasion justified also the reproach of M. de Marchis, of our having got too near the land; since it is probable that the sloop had only been dispatched, upon the knowledge that had been gained in the island of our cruize, by our imprudence in suffering ourselves to be seen by them.

However, notwithstanding the various causes which ought to have occasioned the total miscarriage of the plan of the campaign, on the 4th of May we discovered four vessels, judged to be ships from China, because, sinking deep in the water, they appeared to be heavy laden in their tops, according to the nature of the goods they carry; a circumstance not observed in vessels less encumbered, and able to sail with more advantage. It would be tiresome to give an account of the manœuvres of that memorable day, in which the joy of the crews was at first the greater, as the enemy seemed to shew extreme confidence, and were sailing down directly upon us. It was then only eight o'clock in the morning, and they were not at four leagues distance; we did not dare to put upon the same tack as they were, for fear of alarming them; this was only done about noon, when, by the several evolutions they were observed to make, it was judged they were beginning to suspect us, and when they were besides too far engaged, being only about a league from us.

The chase we gave them was then so ill executed, that we were not able to gain more than about a league upon them before night, when we entirely lost sight of them.

M. Marchis observed four capital faults, which had occasioned the little success of the day.

1st. He had for a long while complained that we did not keep in the latitude towards the middle of the island;—that his instructions were by no means followed, which were, that the *Syrene*, as the best sailer, should keep the most to windward, in $16^{\circ} 50'$, and we in the middle, in 15° , from 45
to

to 50'. Instead of which it appeared, that on this day the most forward vessel was only in 15° 45'. What a prodigious difference! If we had remained in our proper stations, the enemy being exactly in the mid-way of the land, according to custom, would have been under our sheets, and could not have escaped us.

2dly. He wanted the *Syrene*, on account of her superior swiftness, to be always, at break of day, three leagues to windward; which was not done; the three vessels for some time having sailed all together.

3dly. In order more effectually to deceive the enemy, he pretended that it was necessary to hoist Dutch colours. It was the more easy to impose upon them by that manœuvre, as it was the season for the second fleet from the Cape, and as it was settled, that in case of separation the meeting was to be at St. Helen's.

4thly. As the *Syrene* was seen to fall to leeward in the afternoon, the signal was made to her to sail as close to the wind as possible. This signal was made with a flag half blue and half white. M. Marchis was much concerned at this, because, the white colour being the most conspicuous at a distance, the sight of that was alone sufficient to confirm the English in their suspicions, and entirely to discover us.

A fifth, more essential fault, was found out two days after, when the *Syrene*, which had been lost ever since the evening of the 4th, was found again. M. Dumatz, her Captain, having passed by our stern, reported, that at the beginning of the night, not distinguishing us any longer, he had made several

ral racks; that in the morning, chance had made him discover the four English vessels; that he had kept them in sight all day; that towards the evening he had perceived he was gaining upon them; but that, uneasy about our absence, he had thought proper to return to the place of cruize, and to give an account of what he had seen.

This event occasioned the question to be asked, why M. de Marnieres had not given instructions in case of separation at the time of chasing. It is certain that the *Syrene* was sufficient to seize and take those four vessels in tow, if she had been ordered to pursue in full sail, without concern for the rest of the squadron.

By the report of the frigate, it was judged that the English had not given up the project of entering the island, and upon this occasion the most prudent plan was adopted, which was to continue to block it up, by keeping, however, at a sufficient height to discover the enemy again, if they should remain in those latitudes. In this instance M. de Marnieres, sensible, from all that had passed, of the injury he had done to Government, was desirous of reconciling himself with M. Marchis; he invited him to a Council holden among the Captains, and followed his advice; but this did not last long.

The 14th of May we got a more complete sight of a vessel discovered the day before. This vessel, after several manœuvres, bore down upon us; we found that she was a man of war, but of inferior force to us; there was every reason to presume that she was the ship for the effort, coming from Europe, to take under its convoy the ships of the English Company: we had as yet done every thing that was necessary to

deceive the enemy; we had sent away the frigates nearer to land, we had shut up the port-holes of our first battery, and even masked some of the second; in the mean time we were endeavouring apparently, by several expedients, to make the *Acbille* lighter; and attempts were made in this respect, which should have been tried sooner. Even the advice of the sailors of Provence was neglected, although they had been before on board this ship, and indicated the methods practised upon other occasions to make her a good sailer.

The wind, however, was favourable to us, and though the enemy, having discovered our superiority, was bearing away, yet we gained upon them imperceptibly, and our victory seemed unavoidable, when M. de Marquieres, by an imprudence which can only be attributed to French eagerness, lost all the advantage of the day. In order to provoke his adversary to the combat, he wanted to fire chasing guns; he mentioned it to M. Marchis, who represented to him—1st. That it was entirely discovering ourselves to be French; that the enemy, although they had every reason to believe us such, might still be in doubt. 2^{dly}. That we were going to put it in their power to calculate our forces, by the weight of our metal. 3^{dly}. That the chasing guns would retard our progress. 4^{thly}. That on the contrary, by inviting him to answer us with his stern-chace, we furnished him with the means of accelerating his flight, as it was known by experience. The Commandant, not being fond of representations, was regardless of this, he gave orders to bring the guns forward, and to prepare for action. Accordingly, the Chaplain gave the blessing, and the acclamations

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of *Vive le Roi* announced the joy and eagerness of the crew. Silence ensued, when M. de Marnieres pronounced the following harangue :

“ My friends, you are all brave men—I have nothing to say to you—you want cloaths, there is “ a magazine where you will find some.”

Fresh acclamations followed this speech ; the white flag was hoisted, and several chasing guns loaded with ball were fired. At the third shot the English were roused ; they hoisted the flag of their nation, with a red streamer, and answered us by seven stern-chace ; we fired at a distance, but the enemy seemed to be pleased with the sport, and they returned us our bullets with interest ; we were now but just within canon-shot ; their guns carried further than ours, and fell in our rear, at the distance of ten toises from our stern gallery : during this time the enemy were endeavouring to lighten the ship, by throwing every thing overboard, which we perceived, by the several things which floated along side of us. The wind continued to favour us ; the English were falling to leeward, and we were within canon-shot ; a calm then came on, the enemy were unable to steer the vessel in spite of all their endeavours ; they presented their broadside, and we could count their port-holes ; the Master Gunner, burning with impatience, came to assure M. de Marnieres, that he could distinguish the ship perfectly from his upper deck, and that the whole broadside would take effect. The Captain determined to wait till we came nearer. While these deliberations were going on, the wind changed ; it shifted from one point of the compass to another, and these variations were not sufficiently attended to ; there was no discipline

observed—no man was at his post; every one was talking; one officer was crying out, *brasse bas bord*; another, *brasse tribord*; a third, *brasse quarré*. The enemy, in silence, watched the moment when the wind should settle: this instant arrived; the wind blew S. E.; we bore down upon the starboard tack, and the English, as by enchantment, got suddenly to windward of us, their sails full and swelled out, and cutting the sea with rapidity; then M. de Marnieres fired a broadside, but it was too late. The whole crew was exasperated—not one shot took place—every man was out of his senses;—it was resolved to chase, and we were three quarters of an hour in trimming the sails we might have made use of. The rage became general. The Staff officers alone could not contain their joy; they ate their suppers with an appetite and a satisfaction that cannot be too much admired. The night was dark, and we waited for the moon, to estimate the distance of the enemy. The moon appeared, but it was only to make our shame conspicuous; we found that they were already near half a league ahead. Having nothing better to do, we continued the chase; we had kept sight of the ship tolerably well in the night; but the Captain, absorbed in grief, having retired into his cabin, in two hours time the enemy had evidently gained ground, and the crew, unable to contain their rage, attributed this to the negligence, unskilfulness, and especially to the bad intentions of the officer of the watch.

At day-break we discovered two other sail, besides the ship we were chasing, which soon sailed close to the wind, as we did: the enemy seemed embarrassed at this manœuvre, and they bore down for a mo-

ment, as if to cross ahead of us, and for fear of finding themselves between us and the two vessels, which it was imagined they took for our frigates.

M. de Marnieres, being recovered, expressed his satisfaction at seeing the enemy bear down; he resumed confidence, and once more flattered himself that he should seize upon her; his eagerness embracing every thing, he would not lose the two other vessels; the frigates would have been of great use in this circumstance, and he was sensible of the fault he had committed, in separating himself from them; they would have given chase to the two vessels newly discovered, which must also have been ships from China, while the Commandant would have pursued and fought the man of war. In order the better to deceive the latter, having observed that our enemy had his flag up, he likewise hoisted a red flag. What was the consequence of this manœuvre? The English ships, perceiving our artifice, bore away again to windward, without any mistrust of the two vessels. We perceived that a fault had been committed, and we endeavoured to repair it by another; the red flag was taken down, and a white one hoisted, with the firing of a gun. The whole of this conduct was absurd. After having thus informed the English man of war we were in chase of, that the two vessels which appeared did not belong to us, this was also endeavouring to make the vessels from China sensible we did not belong to them; and as they must have observed us pursuing the former, it was also letting them know, that, we being French, the ship we were chasing must necessarily belong to their nation. M. Marchis,

very much piqued at not having been consulted in the least upon this business, made loud complaints; he foresaw what had happened, which is, that we should take neither the man of war nor the merchantmen. M. de Marnieres had for a long while entertained the hope of taking the first, and he consoled himself with regard to the rest, saying, that he preferred glory to profit. But the whole was a device of the enemy, who, by artfully slackening his course, induced him to continue the chase, and by that means gave time to the merchantmen to disengage themselves, and to fly; when he thought them out of danger, he reassumed his course, and evidently left us far behind.

The next day no more ships were seen; we thought ourselves very fortunate in finding our frigates again; and, the scurvy beginning to attack the crews, we talked of putting an end to the cruize. There was at least one more vessel to pass from Bengal. M. Marchis proposed to take the sick men out of the frigates, and to leave them upon the station one month longer; but the Commandant, too weak, did not dare to propose the thing to the Captains, and, notwithstanding all the observations of his second Captain, settled the time of his departure, in order to put in at the bay of All Saints, the place to which we were ordered to go, not to display our shame there, but to dispose of the rich cargoes we were to have seized.

M. de Marnieres had not even, before he departed, the trifling satisfaction of doing some mischief to the enemy, as he had flattered himself he should: with the intention of avenging himself of his ill success, he threatened to attempt a *coup de main*

main upon the road of St. Helen's, either to carry off the vessels which should be there, or to burn them: the report of the frigates deprived him of this desperate resource, for they declared that there was absolutely nothing in that road.

We anchored on the 9th of June at the bay of All Saints, where we had the mortification to find ourselves along side of the six China ships which we had missed, and whose cargoes, according to the deposition they had given in to the Admiralty of that town, amounted to 9,000,000 crusades, that is to say, 22,500,000 livres *.

It is unnecessary to add how much we were laughed at by the Captains; while they owed to us, that their crews, which did not consist of a hundred men in each ship, were more than half of them disabled; and while they confirmed the accuracy of all the observations of M. Marchis, respecting our improper manœuvres, and our false calculations. M. de Marnieres had still a glimpse of hope remaining; by exerting all his efforts with the Portuguese Governor †; that he might oblige the English to set sail, after having obtained the succours they asked for; but the English answered with haughtiness, that they could not do this in presence of an enemy,

* Upwards of nine hundred thousand pounds sterling.

† These efforts must have been the more unavailing with the Vice-Roy, as he favoured the English very much, and had besides, no great veneration for M. de Marnieres, whom he called a *poor huomo*, a poor creature. As the Commandant never went to his house without being accompanied by the Chevallier de Grasse, Captain of the *Zephyr*, a kind of Colossus, very heavy, very stupid, and very brutish in his arrogance, the Governor used to call him *Cavalle*, a horse.

and that if the Governor persisted in this act of violence, they would run themselves aground under the forts of the capital of Brazil, and would make the Court of Portugal responsible to their Government. In the mean while, they built in silence a sloop, which they fitted out and dispatched to Europe, to give intelligence of their situation, and to ask for an escort. This sloop set sail before our eyes, and it was not thought worthy of the French flag to pursue her.

Thus ended this expedition, which was unsuccessful only from bad intentions—from disobedience to the King's orders, and to the instructions of the Ministry—from a variety of faults committed with impunity—from prevarications on the part of the Subalterns—and from weakness on the part of the Chief.

It cannot reasonably be attributed to M. de Marnieres, that he had not a sincere desire to capture the vessels he had orders to intercept; he ardently wished, especially, to take the man of war. With the moderate fortune this Captain was possessed of, a profit of above a million *, which would have been his share, was too powerful a bait for him to give up wilfully the rich captures that might be made; and with regard to the second conquest, it was of the utmost use in balancing his first mistakes. It would have been no small triumph to carry back into France a man of war taken from the English in those distant seas; a kind of triumph which we had only experienced twice since the be-

* About fourscore thousand pounds.

ginning of hostilities. There are certainly errors enough to be laid to the charge of M. de Marnieres, who, notwithstanding his good intentions, was essentially, and to all intents and purposes, the cause of the failure of the campaign.

These errors were, first—in not having put M. Marchis in full possession of his post, as second Captain, on the departure from France—in not having punished the officers, when they first failed in respect towards him, as if they did not consider him as such—in not having literally conformed himself to his instructions, in adopting his advice upon all points, since he was obliged to ask, and to follow it—in having encouraged the contempt of the Subalterns, by his ill-judged presumption—in having taken no notice of all the injurious behaviour of the latter—and finally, in having carried matters so far as to give a sanction to them by his example.

With regard to the Officers*, it is certain, from the general testimony of all the crews, that, far from seconding the good intentions of M. de Marnieres, they have contributed their utmost efforts to make them miscarry, apprehending the chastisement which they might incur, if M. Marchis, by the success of his expedition, should acquire some credit with the Ministry; and, seeing no other method to escape them, but by causing the complete failure of the project, and by representing it's author as an adventurer, who had led Government into an error, they sacrificed a moderate profit to the envy with which

* The Staff of the *Achille* is only meant here.

they

they were at first tormented, and afterwards to the preservation of their rank, and to their own security.

The better to understand to what a degree their want of subordination, their malice, and their rage had been carried, we must resume matters further back.

In the first preparation for action, M. Marchis, as second Captain, had taken his post upon the fore-castle, where a Sub-lieutenant* was to be under his orders; but, far from receiving them, the latter pretended having a right to command alone, adding, that he was not made to serve under such a beggarly fellow: fortunately, this quarrel could have no effect upon an engagement, which did not take place; but it was attended with consequences during the rest of the campaign, inasmuch as, notwithstanding the complaints of M. Marchis, he received no satisfaction; which encouraged the insolence of the other, and of the rest of his comrades.

M. de Marnieres had pretended, that this adventure was a private affair between man and man, which it was customary for Officers to decide among themselves. In consequence of this opinion, when they arrived at the Bay of All Saints, M. Marchis invited his adversary to land; but the latter refused it constantly, under pretence that it was beneath him to fight with a man of his stamp. Upon this there arose so violent a quarrel, that M. Marchis, being strong and stout, after having boxed his adversary's ears, was going to throw him into the sea;

* M. de la Vicomté.

from the gallery, where this scene passed, when people came to separate them. They were both put under arrest; but the body of Officers having abused the Commandant for assimilating so vulgar a man to one of their members, he sent M. Marchis to land, and the other left his cabin.

It was necessary to return to France, and that M. Marchis should reembark. M. de Marnieres contrived to put him under an arrest on his entrance into the ship, and to leave him in that situation till the moment when we anchored at Brest, on the 3d of November. He arrived in this state of captivity, like a prisoner of state, guilty of the most heinous offences: he set off for Paris; and, by the examination of his complaints, it was acknowledged that there was not only good reason for them, but that he had also given an excellent project. He was vaguely assured that justice should be done to him, and he was asked to execute other expeditions of the same nature, with a promise that he should be absolute master of them; that he should be appointed Chief Commander; and that he should only have under his orders Officers belonging to the India Company, the most tractable and most experienced. Such was the vanity of this man, that, forgetting every thing he had suffered—all the indignities, all the horrors, with which he had been tormented—all the deceit that had been practised with regard to him—he consented to every thing that was required of him, and prepared himself for a second secret expedition.

In the meanwhile, M. de Marnieres had been called upon, and was very much embarrassed; he was

was nephew to the Lieutenant Colonel of the Regiment of Guards, an Officer very much esteemed; he had other protectors, whom he had stirred up in his favour, and all his corps, besides, were interested in not suffering him to fall a victim in a dispute of such a nature. Unfortunately, the engagement of M. de Conflans had not brought that corps into very high estimation; and if there had been a favourable opportunity for making an example of a naval Officer in a Court Martial, it was certainly that.

M. de Marnieres, a man of understanding, but whose head was easily bewildered, committed in his despair a rash act, worthy of the most extravagant midshipman, or rather, in strict justice, an act for which he deserved capital punishment. He one day went to the play, where M. Marchis was, and, as the latter was handing a Lady down stairs, he gave him a slap on his face with his left hand, and with his right drew his sword, and shortened it in order to make use of it against him as a dagger. This occasioned a great tumult. They were arrested, and some of the guards of the Marshals of France were set over them: the affair was carried to their tribunal; with which solicitations prevailed so strongly, that they declined settling the matter, under pretence that M. Marchis, having had only a brevet of Captain of a frigate for the campaign which was at an end, he was no longer a military man. They only punished M. de Marnieres for having disturbed tranquillity in a public place, and condemned him to remain a few weeks at Fort l'Evêque.

During this interval, the protectors of the prisoner surrounded the Minister: they represented to him, that

that it was not possible for a man who was disgraced, by having received a slap on the face, to have a command; that it was necessary he should previously fight; that he should either be killed, which would render him useless, or that he should kill, which would render him amenable to justice; that in either of the cases he could not remain in France; and that it would therefore be most proper to avoid a misfortune, by giving him orders to quit the kingdom before his adversary came out of prison. Such was the weakness of Government, that the circumstance which ought to have ruined M. de Marnieres without resource, on the contrary saved him. M. Marchis received an order to quit the kingdom at a stated time, and he went into the service of Denmark.

A short account of M. Marchis.

M. Marchis was born at St. Malo; his father kept a little alehouse there, at the sign of the White-crofs: he did not succeed, and, upon the report of his son having made a fortune in India, he embarked as a soldier on board the *St. Louis*, a ship belonging to the Company, where he died. His son had passed as a common sailor. M. Dupleix took him from that situation, to make him navigate as an officer upon the private ships which he was fitting out for the trade of India. It was then that M. Marchis, coming back from Manilla on board of one of those ships, as second Lieutenant, was taken in the straits of Malacca by the English, who landed their prisoners at Batavia. M. Marchis was not deficient either in understanding or talents; he had a disposition to learn all languages

guages with facility; for this reason, after having learned Dutch, a citizen of Batavia gave him an embarkation of 150 tons to conduct to Peru. It was on his return from that voyage that I got acquainted with him, being then just arrived, and appointed supercargo for China. A word which the General said to me, furnished me with an opportunity to propose M. Marchis to him as first Lieutenant of the ship on board of which I was to go. He told me to bring M. Marchis to him, for he did not know there was such a man in being. However, after a few questions, he pleased the General, who appointed him first Lieutenant in the service of the Company.

Our voyage was but just begun, when I remarked a share of self-sufficiency in M. Marchis, which exceeded his talents; he had no suppleness with his superiors, was haughty with his equals, and treated his inferiors with contempt; more especially he was singularly vain, and attempted to keep up his consequence by unsufferable gasconades. I did not fail to represent to him in private that this was not the way to get forward, especially in a foreign country. But my counsels being often repeated, alienated M. Marchis from me so much, that I saw him no more after our return from this voyage. As no Captain would receive him as a second, an old vessel was given him, upon which wood for construction is fetched along the coast of Java; an employment which no one will accept.

M. Marchis, to extricate himself from this situation, thought proper to marry the young widow of a hair-dresser, of a French family of refugees, whom he knew to be much protected by the General; by this means

means he got a fine ship of 1200 tons, quite new, coming from Europe, destined to go to Surat, and from thence to Moka: which is an exceeding good voyage. When they came back to Surat, the business was to return to Batavia, in order to have the ship cleaned and careened; but M. Marchis wished to return to Moka, that voyage being lucrative.

It is necessary to know, that in the service of the Dutch Company, the Captain is absolute master while he is at sea, but as soon as he has cast anchor in any road or port, where there is an establishment of the Company, he cannot do the least thing without the order of the man who commands by land; these orders, of whatever little consequence they may be, are even given in writing, and are an indemnity to the Captain. The person who then commanded in the road was an extremely rash and extravagant man, destitute of probity. M. Marchis easily engaged him, by some views of interest, to appoint him to return to Moka, and to send back to Batavia the ship destined for that voyage; and he also persuaded him, that there was nothing more easy than to run aground and to careen the ship in the river of Surat. Two Captains of the Company, exceeding good sailors, whom I knew there at that time, being acquainted with this resolution, went to represent to the Director, that, as servants of the Company, although the matter did not immediately concern them, they felt themselves obliged to give him notice that the ship would infallibly be lost in that enterprise: they were not in the least attended to.

Accordingly, M. Marchis run his ship aground, which split as soon as the water retired. The Di-

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rector then represented to M. Marchis that they were both ruined, but that perhaps if one of them deserted, the other might be able to exculpate himself, by laying all the blame upon the absent man. This made M. Marchis take refuge at Bombay, and from thence he returned to Europe. The worst part of the affair was, that he carried off between forty and fifty thousand livres †, which he had taken at a venture at Batavia; instead of which he only left his wife in misery, where I saw her five years previous to my departure from India.

† Between one and two thousand pounds.

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N° I.

*Extract of a letter from Rome, of the 27th of May,
1768.*

YOU judge rightly when you discover the Jesuitical spirit in every thing which is issued at present from the Court of Rome ; Ricci is the author and instigator of it. This outrageous despot foresees his fall to be almost inevitable, but, like another Sampson, he means to fall with eclat, and, if possible, to involve the universal Church in his ruin. Thus it is that the brief so much laughed at, which you consider as an imprudence, a great oversight, a delirium of old-age, is on the side of the Society a masterpiece of politics. By this contrivance they set the temporal and spiritual powers again at variance with each other ; they renew a dissension more difficult to be quelled than ever ; and they take perhaps the only method to rekindle fanaticism, extinct in most of the kingdoms of Christendom. Clement XIII. by abdicating his quality of Lay Prince, to restrain himself to that of Chief of the Church, eludes with subtlety the right of the strongest. How is it possible to attack him, when intrenched, if we may use the expression, in the forts of the Catholic Faith ? How can we attack the Holy Ghost, with whom he assimilates himself ? What thunder can be opposed to that spiritual thunder ? Can offended Kings equally lay aside the august titles of most Christian and most Catholic Majesty, &c. ? Will the sons take up arms against their

disarmed father? and if they do, the spirit of peace and charity, the true evangelic spirit with which the Sovereign Pontiff decorates himself—his declaration, that human blood ought never to be spilt, in a quarrel wherein God alone can be his support and his judge; are not these the most proper means to preserve at least, while he loses his dominions, the affection of his subjects? Thus he contrives to cast all the odium upon your military executions, and renders, at the same time, both tyrannical and puerile, your recovery of possessions, very legitimate perhaps at another time. Besides, humanity always pleads for the unfortunate; in the great tragedy which is preparing, the people will be moved in favour of a man grown old in Apostolic labours, praying and lamenting at the feet of the altars, offering singly to undergo all the punishment which the Princes chuse to inflict upon him, even banishment, in imitation of his courageous predecessors, rather than betray the cause of the Church, or the duties of his Ministry.

Thus, by the conduct of the Holy Father, the offended Princes are reduced to enter the lists with him upon equal terms; that is to say, with the pen, and with manifesto's. What will you gain by this? What will all the perquisitions of your Attornies General, or the decrees of your Parliaments, avail, against invisible anathemas, which cannot be overthrown by the most eloquent language? Will you have recourse to your Divines? Undoubtedly, you will find some of them base enough, and sufficiently sold to the Court, to betray their consciences, and to find the cause of the Pope a bad one, were it ever so good. But will the authority of a few individuals be acknowledged,

acknowledged, in a cause which concerns the whole Church? There must be a General Council, or at least national Councils; and it is to this that the Jesuits wish to bring you. Suppose that in France, for instance, a general assembly of the Clergy should be holden, as in 1682; is it to be imagined that Lewis XV. would be as much master of this as Lewis XIV. was of the former assembly? If at the last council, in 1765, convoked only for the preservation of temporal interests, there was no possibility of putting a stop to the ferment, but by the dispersion of the members, what would there not be to fear from this, in which the Bishops will take advantage of the services that you will want of them;—in which, acknowledging in some measure the necessity of their concurrence, for the independence of the Crown, you would again submit yourselves to their arbitration;—in which, before they determined upon the real object of the convocation, they will renew all their demands, and will require that all their complaints shall be redressed, and all their protests attended to. You may be assured that the Jesuits, from the extremity of Italy, would govern this conventicle, almost as strongly as the Pope's Consistory at Rome; and what fatal consequences might not this step be attended with, though at first sight it appear the most prudent that could be taken, the most conformable to the religion of the King, while it is in reality the most proper to awaken fanaticism, and to rekindle the flames of discord from one end of Europe to the other?

What can be done in such circumstances, and how are we to extricate ourselves from this embarrassment? Shall we, like Alexander, cut the Gordian

knot, tear off the veil of superstition, and sap to the very foundations a colossal power, which has no other support than the heads of the Monarchs trampled under it's feet? Such is the wish of the clear-sighted philosopher, such would be the system of an intrepid politician. Unfortunately, this enlightened age is not sufficiently so, suddenly to alter maxims transmitted from age to age, and consecrated by a long succession of ignorance. It has been said, that religion was the firmest support of the throne, that without it there would be no good subjects, and that if it did not exist it would be the interest of Kings to create one.

Since a total breach was not determined upon, the brief in question ought to have been considered as if it had never happened; the revoking of it should have been treated in a clandestine manner; a dangerous eclat ought not to have been given to this affair; more convenient times should have been waited for; if it proved impracticable to succeed with the reigning Pope, we should particularly have avoided to debase the Royal dignity, and to disgrace it by open and fruitless negotiations; neither should we have reduced ourselves to the cruel alternative, either of committing hostilities against an unarmed Pontiff, or of being obliged to have recourse to the assistance of the Bishops, in a cause which in fact is their own, and of which they will always be both judge and party.

But profound speculators are still able to trace in these dissensions the pencil of Loyola. In the extremity to which the Jesuits are reduced, it is their interest to excite troubles and dissensions in all parts—to agitate Europe, in every sense, in order to endeavour

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endeavour to resume their situation, and to regain the ground they have lost. It would not therefore be a matter of surprize, if they should themselves have fomented discord in the councils of Princes, and if, after having armed the Pope with anathemas, they should arm the Kings with their thunder. What will be the result of all these exertions? Let us not forestall events; but their restoration would certainly be more astonishing than their fall.

N^o II.

*Extract of a letter from a Philosopher travelling into
Corfica, dated the 20th of August, 1768.*

YOUR politicians, Sir, are engaged in speculations about what we intend to do, with the island of Corfica. Permit me to acquaint you, that, supposing a speedy and voluntary surrender of it's inhabitants, it is one of the best acquisitions France could make; it is a fruitful and excellent country, very proper to indemnify her for the loss of part of her other colonies; it will, for instance, be an admirable succedaneum to that of Canada—except furs, it will supply us with every article we got from that country. I am aware that the extent of it's territory is not to be compared to that immense continent; but this is a fresh advantage. Our country is not sufficiently peopled to supply the emigrations which the latter would require; and the defence of the distant posts necessary for our commerce, which cannot give mutual assistance to each other, has always appeared to me an invincible obstacle to our supporting ourselves in the other hemisphere, against the natural efforts of the savages to defend their liberty, and those of our neighbours the English to make incroachments upon us. I make no mention of the distance of this new world, of the fleets that it was necessary to send there at a considerable expence, and of the loss of men unavoidably occasioned by such long voyages. Let us return to the island of Corfica, of which I shall give you a description, in order that

you

you may be able to judge of it, and to estimate the advantages that may accrue to us from it.

The island of Corsica is situated in the Mediterranean, between 39 and 42 degrees latitude, lying between the island of Sardinia to the south, and the coasts of Italy to the north. It's greatest length is from *Capo Bonifacio* to the south, as far as *Capo Corso* to the north; this makes 160 Italian leagues. It's breadth comprehends 75 of the same leagues, from *Capo Galien* to the west, as far as the lake Urbino to the east; it's whole circumference is reckoned to amount to 225 Italian leagues.

This island is divided in ten jurisdictions, and four fiefs, composing 68 *pieves*.

By *pieves* we are to understand a certain number of leagues included under the same administration, although they are dependent on several parishes which compose each jurisdiction.

Of these ten jurisdictions, six are on this side the mountains; these are *Capo Corso*, *Balagna*, *Calvi*, *Bastia*, *Corto*, *Alleria*; and three fiefs, namely, *Nouza*, *Brando*, and *Canary*.

The other four jurisdictions are situated beyond the mountains; they are *Vico*, *Ajaccio*, *Sartene*, *Bonifacio*, and the fief of *Istria*.

There are five bishopricks in this island, *Mariana*, *Nebbio*, *Alleria*, *Ajaccio*, and *Sagorne*.

The interior part of the lands is covered with mountains, several of which are planted with olive and chefnut trees, and furnish pasture for the flocks; between these heights there are many fertile plains; they abound in vines, orange, bergamot, citron, olive, and several other fruit trees. Upon the highest of these mountains, which is called *Gradano*, are the

lake of *Crema* and of *Dino*, at no great distance from each other. From the first, issue the rivers of *Liamono* and *Tarignano*, one of which flows towards the west, and the other in a contrary direction; that of *Gaulo*, issues from the lake *Dino*, and discharges itself into the sea near *Mariana*. Beside these three rivers, the most considerable in the island, and which, with some expence, might be rendered navigable, there are several others; these are only small streams, intersecting almost all the plains, and which would render them still more fertile, if their channels were multiplied.

The little province of *Balagna* is in every respect the most abundant of *Corfica*; that of *Capo Corso*, although the most exposed, is very near as good; and all, or almost all of them, require only the labour of the cultivator.

As for the productions, besides the vines I have mentioned, which yield a white and red wine, that might with care be made comparable to the wines of *Candia*, *Cyprus*, *Syracuse*, and *Malaga*; corn might also be produced there in great plenty, if the territory were fertilized in a small degree; and, notwithstanding the idleness of the inhabitants, nature, in some measure too luxuriant, sometimes deceives their indolence, and presents them with a very abundant harvest. There is no want of cattle; birds of all kinds are to be seen here, and quantities of game, especially the red-legged partridge. During the winter a sufficient quantity of them are caught with a net, to furnish several towns in Italy. This season likewise produces a quantity of black-birds, which are in no estimation any where else, but are here very delicate, and much sought after,

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There is therefore nothing wanting in Corsica with respect to eatables, except good cooks to dress all these provisions. But, independent of the articles of primary necessity, the arts and commerce would also find opportunities to exert themselves.

There are in this country several baths, as well hot as cold; mineral waters, serviceable in all kinds of diseases; olive-trees, which would furnish a considerable oil trade, and fit to supply France; mulberry-trees and silk worms, which, with industry and activity, would enable us to do without the silks of Italy; timber for masts, and ship-building, which would indemnify us for the loss of that of Canada; gold, silver, copper, and iron mines; quarries of marble and porphyry; a crystal of the greatest beauty, by the diversity of it's colours, and which is formed in the mountain of *Borgnano*.

In general, the climate of the island is the finest in the world. The sky is never darkened two days together. There is scarce any winter: the heats of the summer are moderated in the mountains by the north winds; they are more violent in the towns of *Bastia*, *St. Fiorenzo*, *la Gagliola*, *Calvi*, and *Ajaccio*. The illnesses to which the troops are subject, are attributed to the heat of the air; and I believe they proceed rather from want of good water, which those places are very deficient in during the summer, but which might be easily brought down from the mountains.

From this short account, Sir, you will readily judge of the truth of my speculations. I will not dissemble, that these advantages are counterbalanced by the enormous expences which must be incurred in that island, to secure it from the insults, not only of the

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natural inhabitants, whom I suppose to be subdued, but of foreigners. The extent of it's coast, and the facility of landing in several places, would require labours, the calculation of which is alarming. Most of the towns are dismantled, or very imperfectly fortified; the ports either filled up or in bad condition. *Corte*, formerly the capital of the island, and which stands almost in the center of it, at present resembles more a village than a city. *Bastia* is the most remarkable town; several works have already begun to be erected there; but the port, in which frigates and armed barks cannot enter, ought to be cleared. On returning to the western coast, we find *Fiorenza*, a town in the most ruinous condition. It's gulph is immense, and might contain a prodigious number of ships; it is more than a league over, and runs three leagues deep into the lands. It is bordered with high mountains, which shelter it from all kinds of winds except the north-east. The harbour is filled with rocks near the surface of the water, which only admit boats to land. We meet next with *la Gagliola*, which has a bad road, where none but tartans and feluccas can land: after this comes *Calvi*, the port of which, though very large, can only receive frigates of a moderate size: the port of *Ajaccio* is more convenient, and deeper, ships may cast anchor there in the midst of the basin. *Bonifacio* terminates the point of the western coast, where there is a little port, good and secure. At the eastern coast we find *Porta Vecchio*, the most beautiful port of the Mediterranean; the largest ships can enter it; but an unwholesome air prevails in the city, which has occasioned it to be quite deserted, since which it has not been possible to repeople it. Along this coast, as far as *Bastia*, which

which terminates it, we find nothing more than *Alleria*, almost destroyed.

You may conceive, Sir, how much money it would absorb to render so many towns and ports, all essential ones; of any use; and at which, with more or less danger, a foreign enemy might land, and convey succours to the revolted natives.

The villages are infinitely more valuable than the towns, they are almost all built upon little mountains, and in situations fortified by nature; all the houses are furnished with battlements, arched ways, and terraces, and, being contiguous, flank and defend each other; so that each of these places would seem to require a siege, of which we have had a small specimen in the villages of *Barbagio* and of *Putrimonio*.

Another unavoidable expence, which would likewise be enormous, is that of the roads; which it would be necessary to open throughout the whole island: in a word, our engineers, upon a gross calculation, reckon that two hundred millions* must be sacrificed to put the island of Corsica in the most flourishing situation. There is no doubt but that it would one day repay the expences with interest; but are we able to form such projects at this period? This is a matter that must be referred to our good and wise Ministers; it is certain that every thing announces the design of preserving this country, by the troops which arrive here every day, and by the establishments of all kinds that are forming, as well maritime, as military, and municipal.

The Magistracy will find employment enough here,

Upwards of eight millions sterling.

In

In 1739, at the time of the first reduction of this island by the late Marshal Maillebois, there were already reckoned 28,000 assassinations committed with impunity. You may judge how many have happened since that period. It is true that Paoli has established a kind of judicature among his people, but he is not powerful enough to be able to exert it with all the rigour which the ferocity of this people would require. Accordingly, population diminishes here daily. At that time the number of inhabitants amounted to 116,000 men; but at present we should not certainly find an equal number there. It would be necessary to re-establish harmony in all the orders of the State, confounded together. The right of nobility has been taken away by the Genoese from the most ancient families, so that there is now scarce any difference between those who have formerly been Gentlemen, and the Peasants. There were no more offices, no kind of education for children; and the Republic would not admit them to any ecclesiastical or military dignities. Their new Chief has repaired all these disorders as well as he was able, that is to say, he has prevented them from increasing as much as they otherwise would. His precarious authority, ever tottering—his life even every instant in danger—have not permitted him to do all the good he wished, and of which his genius and wisdom rendered him capable.

As for the rest, you may easily conceive, Sir, by this account, from whence arises the invincible hatred of the Corsicans against the Republic; the latter seems to have exerted every effort to destroy these people; they had even forbidden them every kind of trade:
annually

annually seized upon their oils and other commodities at a very low price, and made them pay very dear for salt, iron, copper, and the other articles they might want. In a word, they were treated more like savages, whom it was intended to exterminate, than like subjects who were to be protected. It is to be hoped that our character of mildness, the wisdom of our government, and the goodness of our laws, will repair so many evils, and will make the new kingdom of Corsica sensible of the happiness of living under the dominion of *Lewis the well-beloved*.

N° XIII. (Vol. III. p. 254.)

*A copy of the letter written to the Minister, by M.
d'Acbé, from the Isle of France, October 30, 1758.*

Monseigneur.

I HAD the honour to acquaint you of my arrival in the Isle of France, and of my sudden departure from thence for the coast of Coromandel, resolved upon in a general Council. I have now only to give you an account of my conduct, and of the state of maritime affairs in India.

I left the Isle of France the 27th of January, and was obliged to pass by the Isle of Bourbon, in order to get provisions and other necessaries for my fleet; from thence we sailed the 4th of February following, and, as the monsoons were against us, I resolved, with the advice of my Captains, to take the long course, which is the common practice in that season. The calms and several other obstacles did not permit me to cross the Line till the 17th of April, between the 79th and 80th deg. of longitude, so that I did not discover the island of Ceylon till the 22d of the same month. I then dispatched the *Diligente* to Caricalle, for an interpreter, and to learn the exact state of affairs in that country. As for my part, after having coasted the island with the greatest accuracy, and caused it to be closely examined by my look-outs, I continued my course, and anchored the 26th at the above-mentioned factory, that I might be personally informed of the naval forces the English might have on that coast.

All

All the informations I received seemed very doubtful; but this I was assured of, that the enemy had only a few vessels, which were almost disarmed, and unfit for any future service.

I therefore hastened to Pondicherry, to concert matters with M. de Lally, and begin our operations betimes.

On the 23d, at break of day, I came in sight of Goudelour and Fort St. David, where I observed two English frigates, which had been at anchor there a long time, and did considerable damage in that quarter; after having in vain endeavoured to get away, they ran ashore, and set fire to the ships with the utmost precipitation. This beginning had a wonderful effect on the spirits of the men. M. de Lally proposed to me, that we might not lose any time, to blockade Goudelour and Fort St. David immediately, while he, with the troops he should get from Pondicherry, would march by night to invest these places by land. I had then very few provisions, and much less water left; I had 150 sick, and the rest of the crew exhausted with fatigue, after a passage of 90 days; but, as the good of the State required it, and as the opportunity seemed favourable, I accepted the proposal with pleasure.

Accordingly, I ordered the *Comte de Provence*, and the *Diligente*, to carry M. de Lally and his Staff Officers immediately to Pondicherry, while I anchored in a line with the rest of my forces opposite Goudelour and Fort St. David; and took care to send the Purveyor of the fleet in a frigate, to bring me the provisions that were necessary.

The night from the 28th to the 29th was already elapsed, when the firing of the enemy informed me,

that our land forces, designed to invest the place, were approaching. The *Sylphide*, which I had sent to reconnoitre, then made a signal of nine ships being in sight, which I also soon discovered myself. As they seemed to bear down upon us in full sail, with the wind right astern, I caused the cables to be veered away to the end, and the line of battle to be formed without delay; the *Bien-aimé*, followed by the *Vengeur*, and the *Condé*, was in the front. I placed myself in the center, with the *Duc d'Orleans*, and the *St. Louis*, as my seconds, fore and aft. The *Moras*, which followed, the last ship, made the head of the rear guard, and the *Duc de Bourgogne* closed the line. I likewise ordered the *Sylphide* to post herself in such a manner, as that she might be able to fire at intervals. The ships being all in this position, I made a signal to prepare for action, and we waited for the enemy with firmness.

Vice Admiral Pocock, on his part, with his nine ships, and having the advantage of the wind, was making his dispositions, and formed his line parallel to ours. He placed two ships in front, but with a considerable interval between them, and then, preceded by a ship of force, and followed by three others, they bore down all together to begin the action.

In the mean while, my van being within reach of the enemy, I made a signal to begin the action, and, the two centers soon approaching, the engagement became general about two in the afternoon.

Vice Admiral Pocock, three times driven out of the line, as well as myself, fought me within pistol-shot, and though he drove astern, yet he returned three times to the charge. Supported by my two seconds,

seconds, M. de Surville the younger, and Joannis, we all three made great havock upon the enemy's center, whose fire was principally levelled at me.

M. Bouvët, Commander of the *Bien-aimé*, had not displayed less bravery in the front, for he alone damaged the ship that was opposite to him very considerably. The *Vengeur*, commanded by M. de la Palliere, after a few shots, obliged his adverse ship to sheer off, and, notwithstanding all his efforts, he could not engage her in the action again. In a word, *Monseigneur*, I think myself obliged to do them this justice, that they all kept their stations very exactly, and fought very bravely.

As to the *Duc de Bourgogne*, commanded by M. d'Aprêt, it was never in it's station, from the time the action began; for the Commander fled behind our ships for shelter, and there fired across our masts. The *Sylbide*, commanded by M. Mahi, made but a short resistance, notwithstanding the Commander's good-will to continue in the action; for the first broadside she received, forced her to give way, and fall to leeward, which was no more than I expected. The *Moras*, commanded by M. Bec de Lievre, underwent almost the same fate; for some unlucky shots having disabled half her crew, she was obliged to bear away, to save the rest from destruction.

From what has been related; it is easy to perceive that I was obliged to fight with an equal number of ships, of inferior force to those of the enemy; nevertheless, although the center and the head ship of my van suffered very considerably, yet the English fleet gave way, and retired, being scarce able to bear our fire. When I observed this, I instantly

made a signal for the foremost ships to tack about, in order to cut off, and put the rear of the enemy between two fires, thus separating it from the front, which was greatly shattered; but the smoke preventing my signal from being seen, hindered me from improving the advantage we had already obtained. The *Comte de Provence*, and the *Diligente*, which had not been able to discover, till very late, the reason of my manœuvre, and to whom I had sent a boat to acquaint them of it, began to rally, and draw nearer to me. By this time the enemy, much incommoded, and who had for some time given way, turned again to windward as fast as possible; but, pursuing still my first project, which the ships in my front had not comprehended, I took the resolution at the same time to order the whole fleet to wear with the wind aft. I had two essential reasons for this: first, as night was advancing, I meant to keep as much as possible in sight of Goudelour and Fort St. David; secondly, by this manœuvre I thought to bring on the action again, by drawing nearer to the land; and I placed the fresh ship, that was come up to me, in it's station.

In a word, I made it a point to execute without delay what I had designed; but the enemy, suspecting my manœuvre, hauled the wind still more, and, being at least as much tired of the battle as they were roughly handled in it, under favour of the night, which was coming on, they sailed to leeward, and retired to Madras. I neglected nothing to keep them constantly in view; but, as they kept out no lights, I could not exactly perceive what became of them. The next day I learned that they were in a very shattered condition.

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As I sailed along shore, I ordered the *Comte de Provence*, commanded by M. de la Chaise, who was perfectly well acquainted with the coast, to regulate our course, to direct our tacks, or to anchor if he thought proper. Accordingly, he made the signal for casting anchor, which we instantly repeated.

The next day, the 30th of the month, we found ourselves at anchor before Emparvé, which is seven leagues to the leeward of Pondicherry, where the current and the drift had carried us during the action. At day-break I had the mortification to see the *Bien-aimé* run aground. This vessel, which had fought so valiantly during the engagement, had had her cables cut to pieces, and lost two of her anchors; she had dropped here the only anchor she had left at the cat-head, and it is supposed that the *Duc de Bourgogne*, in passing by her in the dark, had cut her cable in two with it's keel, which exposed her to this unfortunate accident. I cannot express to you the sorrow I felt at this sight, especially as the evil seemed irremediable. When I came to Pondicherry, I stripped M. d'Aprêt of his command, not so much on this account, as for his behaviour in the action, and gave his ship to M. Bouvet, who was inconsolable for the misfortune that had happened to him.

My situation at Emparvé was so much the more cruel, as the King's Squadron, according to what I said before, was in want of water, wood, and provisions, having besides a great number of sick and wounded; nevertheless, after the *Bien-aimé* had received the necessary repairs, I arrived in Pondicherry the 7th of May, under favour of land

and

and sea breezes. This was the hundredth day since my departure from Mauritius.

I intreat you, Monseigneur, to remark, that whenever a ship in this country happens to be embayed to leeward of a place, in the months of May and June, it is very difficult to get out; however, I have had the good fortune to surmount this difficulty, and to effect my arrival here, though not without considerable labour.

However this may be, the result of what I have hitherto said is, that I have landed the money, troops, and warlike stores, with which I was charged, for Pondicherry, and although my men were exceedingly harrassed and weakened by three long voyages, performed in contrary seasons — that I gave battle to the English fleet, which was come either to relieve the place lately besieged, or to carry off the effects; — that having driven them to leeward, I prevented them from executing their project; — that the presence of the King's fleet has also hindered the enemy from laying siege to Caricalle, which I well knew they intended; — and, perhaps, that this action will contribute to the taking of Goudelour and Fort St. David.

After I had disembarked, on my arrival here the 7th of May, the land forces I had on board, I found the fleet almost destitute of men, as much from the number of sick as from the action I had sustained. The mixed Council determined, that I should remain under the walls of Pondicherry, until I got a supply of men, water, and provisions, of which the fleet was in extreme want. Notwithstanding this, having got in provisions for twenty days, I called a naval Council, to which M. de Leyrit and the Counsellors were invited,

invited, to deliberate on the position of the enemy, who, having not been able to reach Goudelour by sea, were now attempting to arrive there by land, as we plainly discovered from the masts of our ships lying in Pondicherry.

In this Council I explained the melancholy situation of a fleet anchored under a fortress, which can only defend it from a great distance; and the misfortunes that would ensue, if it happened to be attacked in that situation. I observed, that the plan was the worst that could possibly have been adopted; and that it would certainly be productive of very bad consequences in India, if by fire-ships, or other things of that nature, which could not be guarded against, we should be forced to run our ships aground, or to set fire to them; that in the present posture of affairs, the minds of the people of the country would be strangely affected by it, especially after the battle that had lately been fought; and that it would be infinitely more adviseable that the fleet should put to sea without her complement of men, than that it should pursue a plan, which would prove not less dishonourable to the nation, than detrimental to the glory of his Majesty's arms, the interest of the public and of the Company.

They all agreed to the solidity of my arguments, but nevertheless they came to no resolution. It was, however, resolved, that I should send to M. de Lally, to acquaint him with the position of the English, who were in sight, and at the same time to ask him for all the succours he could spare, to enable the King's fleet to set sail, in case the enemy should persist in their attempts to relieve Goudelour. I charged the Chevalier de Monteil, Major of the fleet, with

this commission, and gave him a letter to that purpose, and I sent Messieurs de Palliere and Surville, Captains of ships belonging to the Company, and M. de Clouet, Counsellor of Pondicherry, to accompany him.

When M. de Lally was informed by these Gentlemen of the position of the two fleets, he lamented my unhappy situation; but being himself engaged in besieging a strong place, from which it would be improper that he should retire, and not having on the other hand more forces than he wanted, it was with great difficulty he could spare any: however, necessity over-ruling every other consideration, and being sensible that the presence of the fleet might be of great use in hastening the surrender of Fort St. David, he resolved next morning to set off for Pondicherry. There the mixed Council being assembled, he told them, that from the deputation which I had sent him the day before, he understood that the fleet was in great danger, if destitute of men as it was, it were obliged to remain at anchor in the road of Pondicherry; and that, in consequence of this, he would order some troops and seapoys to my assistance.

I cannot conceal from you the joy which this answer gave me; and, to avail myself of M. de Lally's good intentions, we immediately took a review, in presence of the Council, not only of all the men on board, but also of those who were in the hospitals, and might soon be ready to embark for a coup de main.

When the review was over, he gave me 330 soldiers and 600 seapoys, which we distributed among the ships, and ordered them to be embarked without delay. This was done with such expedition, that at
any

any rate I was enabled to put to sea, in sight of the English fleet, on the 1st of June.

As the enemy, who lay at anchor to leeward of me, had been observing me for some time, and saw me fitting out at break of day, they did the same with no less expedition; but whether with a design of drawing me to the leeward of Pondicherry, and carrying me further away from Fort St. David; or whether they were disconcerted at the sight of me, and at the route I was taking; or finally, whether they did not chuse to fight to the leeward; or for some other reason which I am ignorant of, they shortened their sails, and suffered themselves to drive for a considerable time.

As by their manœuvre I entertained some conjectures of what their design might be, I took care not to follow them; as much that I might not lose sight of my object, as that I might keep to the windward of Pondicherry in case of a second engagement. I continued, therefore, my course towards Fort St. David, in order to renew the blockade of it, expecting by that means to draw the enemy there, and to give them battle, if they should attempt to relieve the place, as I had reason to suppose they would. I was not a little surprized when I was told, a short time after, that they had disappeared. I imagined they meant to take a round-about course to the place, but the event shewed my conjecture to be groundless, for I never saw them after.

However this may be, the King's fleet having made it's appearance before Fort St. David on the 2d of June, the garrison sent immediately to capitulate. M. de Lally communicated this good news to me, letting me know, at the same time, how much my presence had contributed to it; he also desired me to

come ashore, that we might concert together what was farther to be done at present; which I did as soon as the weather permitted.

Accordingly, I repaired to Fort St. David on the 4th of the month, where M. de Lally signified to me his desire that the fleet should appear before Devicottah, a little place which he intended to get possession of. I accordingly set sail, and went to the place without delay. This fort having surrendered without making any resistance, I judged it adviseable to proceed some way along the coast, as I had already done. I thought this manœuvre would produce a wonderful effect on the minds of the people of the country, as much to preserve those who were attached to us, as to restrain those who might be adverse.

Besides, I learned by a letter I received from the Governor of Caricalle, that an English ship of two tiers had arrived lately in the road of Negapatnam, which vessel I wished to intercept. I also expected the *Centaure*, which was to be sent to me from Mauritius, and was desirous of facilitating her arrival, and of seizing the supplies that might come to the enemy. These reasons, added to that of getting provisions from Caricalle, determined me to go and anchor there.

Accordingly I cast anchor there the evening of the same day, and the next day I took some refreshments from the town. I asked for some timber to refit the rudders of two of my ships, but could get none. I intimated to the Captains of the fleet my design of running up the coast till we came to the island of Ceylon, which they all approved of, because in that season all the European vessels commonly arrive on the coast of Coromandel.

I imme-

I immediately communicated to M. de Lally what we had determined upon, and on the 9th of June we set out for Negapatnam, where I anchored with the whole fleet the same day. This Dutch settlement saluted the King's flag both by sea and land, and gave us all the provisions, liquor, and rigging they could spare; from thence setting sail, we continued our course towards the island of Ceylon. In our way we met with a little English brig, which I sent immediately to Pondicherry, lest she should retard us in our course. As in the several tacks I made, I appeared again before Caricalle on the 16th of June, I received there an order from the High Council, dated the 13th instant, desiring the presence of the fleet, during the absence of M. de Lally, who was gone into the inland country to execute some enterprize. On receipt of the order, I did not defer one moment to comply with the request that was made to me. Accordingly, I anchored on the 17th at Pondicherry, and the day following I had an interview with M. de Lally, who acquainted me with the design he was going to execute. When he was gone, M. de Leyrit told me he had occasion for some men, to assist, in case of accidents, the troops who guarded the prisoners of war, and I agreed immediately to give him fifty sailors, and an Officer, to mount guard every day in the fort.

In the mean while, the retreat of the enemy, and the superiority we seemed to have on the coast, did not impose upon me. I knew their strength; and with what readiness they could equip their fleet in Madras, and put it in a state to sail up the coast. On the other hand, I saw, with much concern, how little succour could be drawn from Pondicherry, where

where nothing was attended to but M. de Lally's expedition to Tanjour. Thus reduced to make the most of my own deplorable state, I thought of nothing but victualling the fleet in some way or other, in order to be in a condition to attack the enemy whenever they should appear.

While I was absorbed in this business, I received an account from Caricalle, that three large English ships from Bengal had anchored in the road of Trinquebar. I was going immediately to set sail with some ships, to endeavour to intercept them, when I received intelligence of their departure. I was informed, at the same time, that they were richly laden, and had sailed towards Madras. You may judge from this, *Monseigneur*, how much I regretted the having been obliged to quit my cruise. Those who had recalled me, also repented; but it was too late.

It was soon known in Madras what a condition I was in, and how much my fleet was weakened, both by sickness and by the absence of the land forces, from which I could not obtain any further succours. From that period, the enemy thinking that they ought to avail themselves of their superior strength, resolved again to sail up the coast, after having taken 800 men on board, from the garrison of Madras, as I have since learned, which, being added to a reinforcement of 150 from the three Bengal ships, made their fleet infinitely stronger than mine.

The security which prevailed at Pondicherry, respecting the several motions of the enemy, was nearly the cause of our destruction. They were already at Emparvé before I knew it; nor was I even apprized

prized of their coming, till they were observed from our mast-head. My rudder, and those of many other ships, were on shore, and all unfit for service; however, I gave orders instantly that they should be carried on board. I also sent to examine the hospitals, in order to take up those sailors who might still be fit for a coup de main. But, notwithstanding all my efforts, I found my ships still very bare of men, and the few we had were exhausted. Nevertheless, as the enemy were continually approaching, it was necessary to take some resolution. I assembled the Captains of the fleet, who unanimously agreed with respect to the danger we were exposed to, if we suffered ourselves to be attacked while we lay at anchor. Therefore, by their advice, after I was discharged from the care of Pondicherry, by an order of Council, which I summoned for that purpose, I sailed out in sight of the enemy, on the 27th of July, in order to preserve the advantage of the wind, by which I became master of all my manœuvres.

At this time I had only 500 men in my ship; the ships of 70 guns had only between 350 and 400 at most; and the rest 215; and I was even obliged to disarm the *Sylphide*, to strengthen the ships that were weakest with her crew.

Such were the forces with which I was to encounter a fleet that wanted for nothing, superior both in the size of their ships and the weight of their metal; and, moreover, certain of the advantage they had over us on account of the great number of troops with which they were lately reinforced.

Notwithstanding this, the enemy could not perceive our weakness, by reason of the resolute countenance

nance we assumed. The two fleets manœuvred the whole day, in sight of each other. I took the advantage of the night to get to the southward, and in the morning, I lost sight of the enemy. Being at this time near Negapatnam, I resolved to anchor at Caricalle, in order to learn what was become of the enemy's fleet; but I could hear nothing of it. I then made no doubt but that they lay to leeward, in order to wait for us as we passed; whereupon I determined to follow them, in order to preserve the advantage of the wind, which was the only one I had, or could hope for at that time.

I therefore set sail from Caricalle the first of August; and, having ranged my ships all in front, to make them appear to greater advantage, I sailed down the coast, being certain to meet them, if they were there. Accordingly, it was not long before we perceived them. At nine in the morning, I discovered the English fleet opposite Porto Novo, endeavouring to sail up the coast. Upon this I sailed close to the wind, expecting a sea breeze, to be able to bear down upon them without any confusion. The breeze rose at noon, and I formed my line to windward, with the *Comte de Provence* in the front, followed by the *Moras* and the *Duc d'Orleans*, my second in front: after me came the *St. Louis*, followed by the *Duc de Bourgogne*, the *Condé*, and the *Vengeur*, which formed the rear. In this order I advanced towards the enemy, who were at a great distance, which, together with the weight of some of the ships, was the reason that we could not come within reach of their guns till about five in the evening. Notwithstanding this, I was fully determined

mined to avail myself of the advantage I had, and just on the point of beginning the engagement, when the *St. Louis* cried out to me, that she could not open her lower tier; and I perceived, at the same time, that several other vessels were in the same condition. This inconvenience, joined to the quick approach of night, obliged me to sail close to the wind, and to proceed thus in my course, in order to preserve that advantage till I could find a more favourable opportunity.

The following day, having lost sight of the enemy, I went to Caricalle to anchor, in order to learn what was become of them; but I was not long there, before I discovered them myself, with their lights out, about two in the morning, when I made no doubt, but they were endeavouring to get the weather-gage of me; for which reason I put immediately to sea to prevent them, and, sailing along the coast as they did, I observed, at break of day, that they were about a league and a half to leeward. I thought this was the time to begin the attack; accordingly, I made the signal for that purpose, and each vessel executed my orders with so much precision, that the general ardour they displayed in advancing upon the enemy, seemed to me a fortunate presage of success.

My joy lasted but a short time; for I had the mortification to see the *St. Louis*, and two other vessels, in the same condition they were in two days before. The sea was, however, beautiful; but I cannot avoid telling you, *Monseigneur*, that you have been imposed upon, and that the Company has imposed upon itself; for I had but three ships

of war in my fleet: the guns of the other ships were too weak, and, moreover, they were not fit for service. I saw, with concern, the proof of this; but it was necessary to think of a remedy.

In this position of the two fleets, though we were to windward of them, yet the sea-breeze necessarily placed them to windward of us; so that they could oblige us to fight them between the land and their squadron. On the other hand, the condition of some of our ships, whose first batteries were useless, made it necessary to renounce the advantage of engaging to windward. The best thing, therefore, I thought, that could be done, was to order the head ship of our front to bear down, and the rest to follow successively in her wake, keeping the same course in the general tack, to run along the enemy's line; we should then bear down short, in order to pass by the stern of the last of the enemy's ships, and each of us was to pour in a broadside within pistol-shot, running on upon the same tack for a league or two, more or less, that we might still be to windward of them, with the full sea-breeze. By this manœuvre, we should not only destroy one of the enemy's ships, but also be enabled to attack with the advantage of the wind this squadron, which would then be considerably weakened. The worst thing that could befall us, was to fall to leeward, if the wind should fail us too soon, and whatever I could do, could not prevent that.

I dispatched the *Diligente* frigate to the *Comte de Provence*, to inform the Captain of my design, ordering him to execute it at the first signal I should make. I commanded also the *Duc de Bourgogne* to take

take the place of the *Moras*, while this last ship was to fill the station of the former in the rear. Every thing being thus disposed, and the ships waiting for nothing but the instant to bear down, I gave the signal by firing two guns, one after the other.

M. de la Chaife, who commanded the head ship of the van, immediately set about to execute minutely the instructions I had given him: the rest followed him in exact order, and, by the ardour with which each ship endeavoured to keep it's station, it seemed as if all of them were actuated by the same spirit. I believe the steadiness with which this manœuvre was conducted, did not contribute a little towards producing that perplexity and confusion, which I thought I perceived in the enemy's line.

They were soon deceived, as I intended they should be, so that I began to entertain no doubt of the success of this project. In a short time, the *Comte de Provence*, which conducted the head of the line with a prudence and intrepidity that never failed, arrived within about a canon and half shot of the English, and made her last tack to pass by the stern of the last ship of the enemy's line.

We followed her with full sails, in order not to give time to the enemy to recover themselves; for the nearer we approached, the more they seemed astonished at the manœuvre. There was now no time to retract, for we were within gun-shot: in a word, we were upon the point of terminating our enterprize, when, of a sudden, the land breeze stopped, and forced me to form my line opposite the enemy's, and to leeward of the English squadron.

This disappointment did not, however, abate in any

any respect the ardour of the crews, but, on the contrary, I perceived that it rather increased it.

I could not cease admiring the great zeal and willingness, which appeared to direct and accompany the motions of each ship; and I am not afraid to say, that the great precision and firmness with which they performed their manœuvres, made me in some sort unmindful of the weakness of their condition. I hastened therefore to avail myself of this general ardour, in order to put myself in a state to meet the enemy, who were forming their line opposite to, and below mine. The Admiral kept the center, with two of his largest ships, fore and aft. M. Stevens commanded a 70 gun ship at the head of the line, which was closed by a ship of the same force.

The English did not let us wait long, for they bore down upon us at half an hour after twelve; by their manœuvre they seemed inclined to attack our rear, but I prevented that, by making a signal for the rear to come closer to me: they then ran along our line in excellent order.

M. Stevens, finding himself within pistol-shot of the *Comte de Provence*, began to retire, to avoid part of his first fire; but this ship having endeavoured as much to keep her broadside to her, the two fleets soon approached one another, and the moment for beginning the general action seemed to be at hand.

Scarce had I made the signal for this purpose, when the two van guards began to attack each other with reciprocal fury; the fight soon became general, and a quick and heavy fire was kept up on both sides.

But the first fire which we discharged was rather prejudicial to the enemy, for one of their ships lost her mizen-top-sail-mast, and seemed much shattered;

besides

besides, their fire began to diminish greatly on account of the briskness of ours: this, added to the courage of our crews, which seemed continually to augment, might have counterbalanced the superiority of their strength, had not an accident, which I had no reason to expect, changed the face of matters, and turned every thing in favour of the enemy. They had various kinds of combustibles on board; the ship which fought with the *Comte de Provence*, threw one into her, which set fire to her sails and her mizen-mast. This unfortunate vessel, which the conduct and courage of her Commander ought seemingly to have preserved from a similar accident, maintained her station as long as she could, for fear of breaking the line, but at length was obliged to bear away to extinguish the flames, which were extending to her poop. She would have had much difficulty in doing this, had it not been for M. Bouvet, commanding the *Duc de Bourgogne*, who sacrificed himself to shelter her from the continual fire of the enemy, and thus by his valour and prudence saved this ship, which otherwise would probably have been consumed. This action, *Monseigneur*, is beyond all praise, and there is no reward which the author of it may not expect, and of which he is not worthy in every respect.

In the mean while, this forced retreat of the *Comte de Provence* had given the enemy an undoubted superiority. The English Admiral, who well knew the imperfect state of our artillery, endeavoured still to improve it; for, having the advantage of the wind, he fired at us continually with his 32 pounders; so that most of our ships could annoy the enemy but very little. The Admiral himself, recollecting undoubtedly the manner in which I received him the first

time, always presented the quarter to me; the ship which preceded him, fired at me from her stern; but not one of the enemy's ships presented a broad-side opposite me. Besides this, as I was going to windward, in order to give the Admiral my whole fire, a cannon-shot carried off the wheel of my helm, and then, being no longer master of my ship, I drove, in spite of my efforts to the contrary, beyond the *Duc d'Orleans*, which, having screened me for a moment, gave me an opportunity of repairing this damage, and enabled me to place myself in the line before her. The fight then became more obstinate than ever, and, supported by all my ships, which seemed to acquire fresh courage from their weakness, I made head against the enemy: soon after this, my tiller-rope being cut, I was reduced again to the same situation I was in before; but the activity of the officers I had remaining, supplying every deficiency, I was soon in a condition to return to the charge, and help my valiant seconds, who, with a few other ships, sustained the fire of the whole English line.

How shall I relate to you, *Monseigneur*, the prodigies of valour which my van displayed? The constancy of their fire even concealed from me, for some time, the damages the ships had suffered. At length, however, I saw with concern, that the *Condé* and *Moras*, entirely too weak for the line of battle, were obliged to bear away in order to refit, and return again to the charge, not being able to resist a force so superior, with which they were crushed.

The dangers, notwithstanding, which these ships escaped, were nothing in comparison to that to which my ship was exposed a little after. The enemy threw a combustible into my powder-room,

room, and I expected every moment to be blown up. Then it was, *Monseigneur*, that I became more than ever sensible of the happiness of having such Officers as I have, upon occasions like these. Their steadiness and coolness quieted the alarms of the crew, and the fire was extinguished by the care and dexterity of M. Guillemin, my Clerk, without our ceasing all the time to fire on the enemy, or letting them perceive what had happened.

Notwithstanding all these disasters, we still held out, which I myself was astonished at, seeing the English kept up a strong and continual fire, regardless of their losses, from the numbers they had to repair them with. I had in my ship a hundred and ninety killed and wounded, most of my Officers were disabled, and I had received a dangerous wound in the beginning of the action, which gave me great pain. My rigging was cut to pieces, my sails mangled and torn, and several of my guns dismounted; one of the first deck guns, in particular, burst, and killed fifteen of my men; at length I perceived that my crew was almost reduced to nothing, and unable to continue the fire. The rest of the ships seemed to be in no better condition, for the courage of their Commanders could not withstand forces so much superior to their own.

On this account, after an engagement of two hours and a half, seeing the *Comte de Provence* still on fire, my rear shattered, and my own ship in pieces about me, I resolved to bear away before the wind, in order to favour the retreat of the ships which were forced to give way in the action. While we were executing this manœuvre, the tiller of my helm broke, so that my ship being ungovernable, I

could not avoid running foul of the *Duc d'Orleans*, which, to complete my misfortune, was full as much shattered as myself. I could not possibly be in a more critical situation than I then was. The enemy had bore away as we had, but might have taken advantage of our confusion to demolish us totally, had not the crew, following the example of their Officers, who spirited them up in the midst of danger, acted at that moment with so much dexterity and bravery, that they soon disengaged us; and then, being able to master my ship again, the helm of which had been repaired with equal expedition, I took my station in the rear of the fleet, and, firing from both sides, I kept off such of the enemy's ships as might molest us.

We immediately set about refitting our ships in the best manner we could, in order to face the enemy again, in case the Admiral should design to chase us, and, having directed our course towards Pondicherry, I made a signal to the *Vengeur* to take post in my rear. I was infinitely concerned to see the pumping continually going forward on board this ship, as she passed me, and to observe the shattered condition she was in; but I could have expected nothing else, after the brave defence I saw her make in the engagement.

Some of the enemy's ships appeared in sight about half an hour after five in the evening, and seemed to chase us; but, on forming ourselves again into a line of battle, they disappeared, and sailed as near the wind as possible, towards Negapatnam, to anchor. We continued our course to Pondicherry, where I arrived in the evening of the following day, and ordered

dered all the ships to moor immediately in a line as near the place as possible.

The two engagements I had sustained since my arrival on the coast, had cost me very dear, for I had scarce any of my Officers left, having lost Messrs. Bourdonnaye, Blenac, and Duplessis, as well as M. Pascau, a man of merit and distinction; and afterwards Messrs. du Desfaits, a Lieutenant, and the Chevalier Maintier, Keeper of the Colours. M. d'Hercé died of his wounds; and I had the grief to see one of my nephews die before my eyes, who had one of his legs carried off; he had been wounded in the first action, as well as his brother, the Chevalier de Senneville, who received several splinters in his legs: he is an excellent Officer, and was in the engagement of M. Galissoniere: he is my nephew, and, by the death of his elder brother, is become the only survivor of his family. The three engagements in which he fought, my services, and his good disposition, make me hope that you will confirm the commission of Lieutenancy which I have granted him.

Most of the other Officers have been wounded; M. Gothé has had a contusion on his head, M. Baudran in both his legs, and M. Genlis in his arm and knee.

The Chevalier d'Aché has had his hands and face burnt; M. Gressigny, Midshipman, was wounded in both engagements; I myself received a wound in the last, which took up six weeks to cure. In a word, *Monseigneur*, there is not one who has not had his share of suffering: which gives me room to hope, that, in consideration of the wounds of all my Offi-

cers, the toils they have undergone, and the hardships of this campaign, you will reward them all suitably to their merit; which is so much the greater, as they have employed their mental, as well as bodily powers, to assist me in all my operations.

M. Gothé is entitled, by his long services, to the post of Captain; he is my Captain, and an excellent Officer, capable of commanding, and discharging with dignity every sort of commission. He has rendered himself remarkable for his bravery, and has gained universal esteem.

The Chevalier de Monteil, whom I promoted to be Captain of a ship at setting out from the Isle of France, deserves, in every respect, that you should continue him in that post; for he is a worthy man, and endowed with every talent necessary for his profession, and is, moreover, remarkably brave.

M. Baudran has talents, and has given proofs of his bravery, and therefore deserves the same favour.

M. Pommeraye is an Officer of distinction, possessed of infinite talents: he would be a great acquisition for the port service, and merits the rank of Lieutenant, for he is very brave.

M. Larchantel is a very expert seaman, was with me upon the quarter-deck during the action, and proved very serviceable.

M. Genlis has a good understanding, and will make an excellent Officer: I am well satisfied with his conduct.

M. d'Aché will also make a very good Officer; he is brave, and of a mild and amiable disposition, and, moreover, he is my nephew.

M. de

M. de Senneville promises well, has a good understanding, and a pleasing temper, and is extremely brave; he is likewise my nephew.

I cannot forbear asking the same favours, I have requested for my Lieutenants, to be bestowed on my second Lieutenants, to whom I have given the brevet of Lieutenant, as well as that of second Lieutenant to my two Midshipmen, Messrs. Gressigny and Jolins, who are young men of excellent dispositions, of great readiness and understanding; which qualifications will, I flatter myself, speak in their behalf. These little promotions can give no umbrage to any one; the hardships attending an expedition in this part of the world are extraordinary, and so much more considerable than those which are experienced in other voyages, that it would disgust any Officers who might be hereafter wanted for such expeditions, if some encouragement were not given. I hope, therefore, *Monseigneur*, that the small number of promotions I have made, the hardships of the station, and the difficulty and toils which the Gentlemen, for whom I intercede, have undergone, in a country so remote from their own, will have sufficient weight with you to grant the just demands which I have the honour to propose.

Permit me also to recommend to you M. Tremignon, Lieutenant of the ships belonging to the Company, whom I have taken on board my own ship, and given him the commission of a Captain of a fire-ship: he has been wounded very dangerously in the head, and has been near losing one of his eyes.

Messrs. Rigaudiere and Herbo, Sub-Lieutenants to the Company, who have also been on board my

ship, have performed wonders ; it is reasonable that they should reap the advantage of having served in one of his Majesty's ships. I have given each of them a commission of Lieutenancy for a frigate.

I cannot find words, *Monseigneur*, to express how much I am satisfied with the Captains of the Company. They are brave, attentive, and expert seamen.

M. de la Chaise has behaved with so much valour and zeal in the action of the 3d of August, that he has entirely removed the unfavourable impressions which have been endeavoured to be given with respect to him ; he is, on many accounts, deserving of your favour, and that of the Company.

M. Palliere is, without doubt, deserving of the same, for he has acted on every occasion with a degree of skill and precision suitable to the valour which he has displayed.

M. Joannis is possessed of so much valour, that it attracted my notice, in the engagement of the 29th of April ; and adds to this quality, a great share of capacity, and a consummate experience. He remained sick in Pondicherry when we left it, and, notwithstanding his good-will, could not share in the destiny of his ship.

M. Bouvet has distinguished himself in both actions, but more particularly in the last. I have already mentioned the fine manœuvre he executed ; it belongs to you, *Monseigneur*, to judge of his merit.

Equal praises are due to M. de Surville, junior. I find in him every quality belonging to an excellent seamen ; he has acquired infinite honour in both engagements,

engagements, and has been dangerously wounded in that of the 3d of August.

Messrs. Bec de Lievre and Rosbau have done more than could have been expected from the weakness of their vessels. M. Mahi, in the battle of the 29th of April, has made all the resistance his frigate would allow; he advanced with the utmost readiness, and held out as long as it was possible. He is a very good Officer, whom I have charged with several commissions, which he has executed to my satisfaction.

M. Dufrêne Marion was employed in repeating my signals. I have tried him on several important occasions; he is extremely intelligent, a good seaman, dextrous in manœuvring, fit for every service, and may be thoroughly depended upon.

These, *Monseigneur*, are the sentiments I entertain of all the Captains of the Company; they are certainly all deserving of particular favour, and marks of distinction I ask for them as a justice due to their merit, and to myself, under whose command they have been.

I should be sensibly affected, *Monseigneur*, if you did not do for them what your justice, and the goodness of your heart, give me reason to hope.

M. Fermand, my Secretary, received on board my ship a musket-shot, which broke both his hands, one of which is entirely useless. He is a good man, has talents, and has given me much satisfaction; but as he is destitute of fortune, and that his support is his profession, which is his only resource, I flatter myself that you will not, *Monseigneur*, refuse to promote him to a situation that may secure him from want.

want. His talents are well adapted for the office of Engineer in the navy.

I had the honour to remark to you, that the day after my second engagement I arrived at Pondicherry, and moored immediately, in order to put my ships in some state or other of defence, in case of another attack.

I acquainted the Council of State, at the same time, of the condition of the King's fleet, and that it wanted men, provisions, rigging, &c. ; and I demanded masts, yards, and, in general, every thing.

The answer I received was, as usual, that they had nothing, but that they would, notwithstanding, use their utmost endeavours to supply me with some of the things I wanted. Accordingly, I gave orders to all the ships to refit with all speed, and to think of nothing but preparing for sea.

The absolute scarcity they were in at Pondicherry, both as to provisions and other articles that concern the navy, was so great, that at the end of a week we were no more advanced than at first.

The enemy were to windward, and constantly alarming us ; my situation was cruel, and I could not remedy it.

I learned, a little time after, that an English frigate had taken the *Rubis*, a brig that had been dispatched from the Isle of France. The Captain of her, thinking to find an asylum for his ship in the road of Negapatnam, stood within canon-shot of the place ; but the Dutch, either through fear of the enemy, who lay near them, or through ill-will to us, suffered the ship to be taken, without offering to give her the least assistance, although the Captain summoned them to it.

I considered this conduct of the Dutch, as an insult upon the country, and as a breach of the law of nations,

nations, for which there was no other way to chastize them, but to make reprisals.

A few days after, an opportunity offered. One of their vessels from Batavia came to anchor to the windward of Pondicherry, perhaps with a view to examine us. I ordered her to be seized immediately, and put her into the hands of the Superior Council to pass sentence upon her.

Being informed by M. Dujardin, who commanded the *Rubis*, that the *Centaure* was fitting out in the Isle of France when he departed from thence, I dispatched the *Sylphide* to cruize about Ceylon, and acquaint the Captain of the *Centaure*, if she should arrive there, of the measures he was to take to join the fleet with safety.

During this time I did not cease soliciting to have the fleet victualled; but the quantity of provisions they sent us was so small, that I did not yet know what I was to depend upon. Soon after this, the arrival of M. de Lally from Tanjour increased my embarrassment. It was proposed to me to set sail again, with a reinforcement of 150 men, to go in search of the enemy, and endeavour to drive them from their cruize about Negapatnam. However unreasonable these proposals were, yet I thought myself obliged to answer them. I therefore observed to the Council, that I was more in want of ships than of men; that, not having hitherto been able to get the weather-gage in any engagement, I must expect to be in the same predicament whenever I began an action, though it be giving the enemy a great advantage to attack them to leeward. I likewise represented the bad state of my own ship; that her masts were almost unfit for future service, her star-board

board side quite cut to pieces, and the impossibility there would be of putting her out to sea again, if she were exposed to a third action. I also laid before the Council the great trouble we had hitherto had in repairing even a part of the most considerable damages we had sustained. Besides, suppose I had driven away the enemy, I could reap no advantage from this; so far from it, that I should be under the necessity of burning half the fleet, to conduct the other half home, for want of sailors, which failed us entirely, and for want of rigging to repair our damages. The most that could be done at this present time, was to amend our masts and yards; and even when that was finished, what kind of situation should we be in? Moreover, suppose I was beaten, as in all probability I should be, what was then to become of us? The fleet would be lost without resource, and consequently India likewise. But, on the contrary, if I returned to the Isle of France, I should be in the way of receiving succour, which might be sent to me from Europe—of refitting my ships—of appearing again on the coast early in the season—and, perhaps, of fighting the enemy with advantage.

M. de Lally did not, or at least would not, comprehend their reasons, however weighty and convincing they were; he did not even scruple to say, that I abandoned him. Moreover, the people murmured, and began to charge me with all their misfortunes; and said my departure would be a disgrace to the nation. During this time they refused to send me provisions, even such as were necessary for our daily subsistence.

I considered all these ill treatments, and other subsequent proceedings, rather as the effects of animosity on one side, and weakness on the other, than as counsels I could make any use of. I dissembled, however, to prevent an eclat, but I remained always firm in the resolution I had taken, being convinced that it was for the good of the State. I assembled my Captains, who all agreed about the danger of remaining on the coast, considering the bad state of their ships, which would not perhaps be able to reach the Isle of France, if we tarried much longer. Besides, we could be of no further service there; for the enemy being to windward, and we in no condition to wait for them, we were staying to no purpose, except that of exposing ourselves to the dangers which threatened us on all sides. I sent M. de Lally the result of our deliberations, and gave orders, at the same time, for the fleet to prepare for sailing. Accordingly, the ships being repaired in the best manner we were able, I set sail from Pondicherry on the 3d of September, and at the same time I detached the *Sylphide*, which had returned a little before, and sent her to cruise again about Ceylon till the 2d of the month, that I might have nothing to reproach myself with, in case any vessels should arrive to join us, which I could not however foresee. Then, continuing my course, I crossed the Line the 17th, and, leaving those vessels behind which might retard me, I sailed with so much expedition, that I anchored at the Isle of France on the 13th of October, after meeting with several difficulties, calms, and storms in my way.

On seeing a King's sloop in the road, I flattered myself that I was to be relieved; but, on the contrary,

trary, she brought me an order from the King to return to India. I shall obey the order, and you may assure his Majesty, that I shall do my duty there; but, *Monseigneur*, I am in the most distressed situation, and so are all the Captains, Officers, and crews of the fleet. Our ships are all shattered, and, instead of the resources we came here in search of, we meet with nothing but miseries of all kinds.

We are in want of every thing, even our men will fail, how then shall we be able to fight? I left India because I could get no supply there; and upon my arrival here I am still more embarrassed.

In a word, *Monseigneur*, so great is our distress, that we are obliged to send to the Cape of Good Hope one of the King's ships, and eleven others belonging to the Company, under the command of M. Ruis, to get our subsistence from thence, and every thing else, in general, that can be had there. This is the only resource we have, and this is an exact account of our situation. My good-will shall always continue the same, and I wish my strength may be answerable to it.

We are now dispatching the *Fidelle* to carry a million of livres * to Pondicherry. This relief will give great satisfaction, I believe, to M. de Lally, for I know how much he must be in want of it at present.

You could not do me a greater pleasure, *Monseigneur*, than to send M. de l'Aiguille here. He has always been my friend, and you know his talents and merit. I shall do all I can to avail myself of his knowledge; but, *Monseigneur*, a General Officer of his stamp is not in the situation he deserves, when he is

* Between forty and fifty thousand pounds.

second in command. He was more fit than any other person for conducting this expedition. I am also delighted to have Messieurs de Ruis and Beauchene; one may expect to do something to the purpose with such Officers.

All I can assure you of, *Monseigneur*, is, that since the King commands me to return to India, I will obey, and sacrifice my life in his service: the only thing I expect from his goodness is, that, in case I should be killed, or should fall a victim to the hardships of so laborious a campaign as this is, he will not abandon Madame d'Aché, who has sold all her property to support me; and whom I should leave in a most deplorable situation.

An exact relation of the two engagements between the English fleet and that of the King, commanded by Count d'Aché; the first, in fight of Fort St. David and Pondicherry, April 29; the second, in fight of Negapatnam and Caricalle, August 3, 1758.

BEING arrived at Mauritius the 17th of December 1757, and having fitted out a fleet of nine ships and two frigates, we left that island the 27th of January, to proceed to the coast of Coromandel, carrying with us all the troops and warlike stores destined for India. The monsoons being against us, we were obliged to take the long course; for the colony was destitute of every thing, and consequently unable to support the ship's crew, and the soldiers that were to be landed, till the usual and proper season for their departure.

The winds, in fact, were very contrary till the 3d
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of April. On the 17th of the same month we passed the equator, after a most troublesome navigation, and the 22d we discovered the island of Ceylon, from whence the General dispatched the *Diligent* towards Caricalle for an interpreter, while the fleet, following the frigate, advanced also towards that factory. We reckoned that we should get certain intelligence there of the position of the English fleet on the coast of Coromandel. But all we learnt was, the junction of the five vessels of M. Stevens, with those which came from the Ganges, commanded by Vice Admiral Pocock, who had sailed from Madras on the 17th of April, with warlike stores and ammunition on board, leaving two frigates to cruise before Fort St. David.

On the 27th in the evening we set sail from Caricalle, regulating our sailing in such a manner, that we might be in a line before Goudelour at sun-rise. Here we discovered the two English frigates, which, although under sail, yet as they lay between us and the land, they thought of nothing but to shelter themselves under Fort St. David; but, being closely pursued they were obliged to run ashore, and the crew set fire to them, without giving us an opportunity of fighting them. This first exploit, together with the appearance of our forces, seemed to strike terror into the English. The two Generals hastened to avail themselves of this consternation. M. de Lally, impatient to attack Fort St. David, desired to be sent ashore, while the fleet continued keeping close to the wind, in order to preserve the advantage of it's position; and, to contribute more effectually to the enterprize, the fleet was ordered to anchor before Goudelour, M. de Lally having taking up-

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on himself to give strict orders to supply the fleet with fresh provisions, to enable them to continue a cruise of so much importance. In the mean while Count d'Aché detached the *Comte de Provence* and the *Diligente* to convoy the General of the land service, and his principal Officers, to the road of Pondicherry.

While this disembarkation was going forward—after which we expected that the ships would join us soon again, they being necessary for the fleet—we ply'd to windward, in order to anchor before the English fort, and disposed our ships in the most convenient manner to extend the blockade.

The day after, the 29th of April, we heard the enemy's canon firing at the attack of their advanced posts, towards which our troops were already marching to invest the place. Count d'Aché being equally solicitous about the success of the siege, and desirous to cut off all communication by sea, ordered the *Sylphide* to set sail, that she might anchor to windward in the river of Goudelour, and might by this means intercept all succours coming to the besieged, and hinder them from conveying their effects out of the factory. While she was preparing to execute this order, she discovered nine vessels, and made a signal accordingly. The General immediately gave orders to prepare for action, and we ourselves having soon discerned the ships in full sail, bearing down upon us in good order, a signal was made to slip the cables, and form ourselves in a line of battle, sailing on the starboard tack.

While the ships were thus successively arranging themselves, and that we were manœuvring to rally



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some that were to leeward, a signal was made to the *Comte de Provence* and the *Diligente* to advance; and, lest those ships, which were so essentially necessary to strengthen the fleet, should fail to come, Count d'Aché sent a boat, with orders to them to cut their cables, and crowd all their sails to join the fleet immediately, which he was leading on to the enemy; while he himself took care not to keep too near the wind, that he might facilitate the junction of these two vessels, which were anchored in sight. Afterwards, to prevent the English from sending any succours to Fort St. David, we sailed close to the wind, to intercept them, or force them to an engagement.

This was the manner in which we faced the enemy. The *Bien-aimé*, *Vengeur*, *Condé*, and *Orleans*, composed the van; and the *St. Louis*, *Moras*, with the *Duc de Bourgogne*, formed the rear. Between these the *Sylphide* was put, to occupy the place of the chief ship of the division, which was expected every moment, and the station of which we had been obliged to change, by putting the rear in the place of the van, with respect to the position of the *Comte de Provence*, which was to come and join us in the rear. Our course was eastward, and the wind southerly.

The English were also forming their line, and seemed at first to place their frigates in it. They extended it parallel to our's, and bore down upon us all together, without lessening their sails; this made us hesitate to wear all at once, more especially as the *Duc d'Orleans* was not yet come up; but she joined us a little time after, and, as we perceived that the English sailed closer to the wind, and took down some of their sails, so that we might suppose they

they meant to wear of a sudden, to anchor to the windward of Fort St. David; the General made a signal to chase in order of battle.

At noon the English Admiral hoisted his flag, and gave the signal of it. We did the same immediately, and fired a shot; and as they bore down upon us to run along our line, we kept close to the wind, in order to observe the enemy's motions, and we saw they regulated their dispositions by our's, and made one of the ships of their rear come into the front, to equal the forces we had presented to them.

We soon perceived the English Admiral was determined to fight; and therefore, to answer him, and to engage the action at a proper distance from the land to give the *Comte de Provence* the opportunity of joining us, a signal was made for the rear to haul down some of their sails, and we waited for the enemy under our two topsails. At two o'clock we were very near each other; the French line was well formed, and so close, that, by way of precaution, a signal was made to open it a little more; the enemy's line being not so close, and yet as much extended, and ranged in the following order. The English Admiral, bearing a white flag with a red cross at his foremast, had three large ships and a frigate in front; and three other large ships, with a second frigate, which repeated his signals, formed his rear.

At a quarter after two, the enemy bore down to engage. Count d'Aché made a signal to prepare for the fight, and marked out the instant in which all hands were to be at their respective stations. We began to point our cannon, and each Officer was

only intent upon observing the Commander, in the following disposition.

Captain Gothó at the fore-castle, with Messrs. Pommeraye and d'Hercé.

The Chevalier de Monteil, Major of the fleet, with the General, having Messrs. de Sarchantel and Senneville to command the Marines, and assist in executing the signals.

Messrs. Baudran, Senneville, d'Aché, the Chevalier du Pouette, Gressigny, and le Minthier, were at the upper battery.

Messrs. du Duffay, Duplessis, Pascau, the Chevalier de Genlis, and Geslin at the second battery.

The Chevalier de Blossac, de la Bourdonnaye, the Chevalier de Beaudras, and Gui, a volunteer, were at the poop.

All the ships being ranged in perfect order, they haled from ship to ship, to the first of the van, to have a look out for the *Duc de Bourgogne*, in order to facilitate her following us, and being always in our wake.

From the attention which all the Captains shewed in the execution of their different movements, one could not but presage a happy issue. Count d'Aché, delighted with the ardour of his men, who cried out, from one end of the line to the other, *Vive le Roi*, and seeing his van within reach of the enemy, ordered a signal to be made for the attack. At that instant the *Bien-aimé* poured her broadside into the foremost ship of the enemy, and all the other ships successively discharged their fire in the same manner. The English Admiral returned the fire, still advancing towards us, followed by his two seconds,

and approached our center division with a great deal of resolution.

Although the firing was very brisk, and that these two ships directed their course almost constantly towards the *Zodiaque*, nevertheless we obliged them soon to brace their sails aback, while we hauled the mizen sheet close aft, to fire without intermission at the head most of the seconds, which the *Duc de Orleans* was closely engaged with. The *St. Louis* gave an excellent reception to the English Commander in his turn, when, quitting us, he came within her reach. The *Vengeur* seemed soon to have the advantage of her adversary, which sailed as near the wind as possible, and used every effort to get away, particularly to avoid the *Condé*, which endeavoured to bear upon her. The *Moras* also attacked the foremost of the English rear very vigorously. While these things were passing in our front and center, we were much surprized to see the *Duc de Bourgogne*, commanded by M. d'Aprêt, get out of the line, and the *Sylbide*, which she disturbed by this movement, was obliged likewise to give way, to the fire of a ship of the first rate.

In the mean time, the English Admiral, always intent upon fighting the *Zodiaque*, had quitted the line to approach within pistol-shot; and while we were answering his fire with great vivacity, his rear was attacking the *St. Louis* and *Moras* to advantage, they being left alone by the desertion of the *Duc de Bourgogne*.

Our head ships were obliged to make sail, in order to keep opposite to the English, and were sufficiently advanced to have room enough to wear be-

tween the first and second ship of the English line; our General immediately made the signal for them to do this, in order that they might put the rear of the English between two fires, as they persisted in attacking our rear so closely, as even not to take any notice of the distance from their van.

Unfortunately for us, we had no frigate to repeat our signals; and the smoke, as it happens too often, hindered M. Palliere from observing the signal. We haled as loud as possible to the next vessel, to endeavour to pass the orders from ship to ship; but to no purpose. The *Vengeur* crowded sail to come to a close attack, the *Bien-aimé*, within pistol-shot, kept a constant fire; but received a number of shots in her rigging. A little time after, we took down the signal, seeing the greatest part of our ships had suffered too much in their rigging to wear the wind ahead; but it was thought proper that we should wear all together the wind astern, as soon as a favourable position offered; for the enemy's ships, bearing down upon our rear, were driving considerably to leeward, which exposed their rear to be cut off; without reckoning that it was our advantage to come nearer to the coast, which it was of so much consequence not to lose sight of. At this time the *Duc de Bourgogne*, running along our line, fired, without knowing it, several shot into our ship, and we in vain made a signal to bring her to order. The *Sylphide*, which stood to leeward, fired with more attention at certain intervals, and advanced towards our van, where the *Bien-aimé* and the *Vengeur* had disabled their adversaries, and driven them with considerable advantage. About four

o'clock

o'clock the *Moras* was obliged to quit the line, having received a great quantity of shot between wind and water; and from that time, all the attacks of the enemy were directed to the center division.

The fight now became more animated on both sides; and we perceived the *Comte de Provence* and the *Diligente* exerting all their efforts to come into their stations; and whether it were that this reinforcement was the warrant of the victory, it is certain that the fire of the *Duc d'Orleans*, the *Zodiaque*, and the *St. Louis*, was never better supported. The Admiral soon gave way; and, as we found ourselves under the stern of the *Duc d'Orleans*, we were obliged to pass before him, to avoid the latter. But immediately hauling our mizen sheet close aft again, we came to the position that suited us best; the *St. Louis* having, by this means, a ship more than she had to assist her.

In the mean while, the firing continued incessantly, and ours was such, that the English Admiral was obliged to retreat a third time. As he suffered himself to fall to leeward, he came opposite to the *Duc d'Orleans*, who fought him with vigour, and falling again within reach of the *St. Louis*, M. Joannis fired several broadsides at him within the range of point blank shot; after which he remained to leeward with his sails shattered. The other English ships followed his example, bracing aback to lie to: this caused a considerable space between the center and the front of the enemy.

The *Vengeur* then crowded all her sails to cut off the ship which the *Bien-aimé* kept under her fire against her will; the *Sylphide*, with a great deal of

ardour, followed, and kept close to the wind, in order to be in a situation to reach the enemy with her cannon. The *Comte de Provence* was upon the point of being enabled to bear down the wind ahead, and with her tack to get into the center of our line, into which the *Diligente* was almost rallied, and began already to repeat our signals.

As the rear of the enemy remained in the same position, and our vessels were far advanced, it might be easily cut off on the other tack; the manner of doing this was to veer quickly all together, sailing on the larboard tack. Count d'Aché being of this opinion, we lost no time in wearing, so as to bring the wind on the other side of the ship, most of our vessels not being able to bear down the wind ahead; the signal was therefore made for wearing the wind astern; to which we added that of the order of battle, sailing on the larboard tack, that our ships might better comprehend the reason of our manœuvre.

The English Admiral soon understood what we were about, or at least he made a signal very quickly to all his ships, to keep close to the wind; and he himself, who was the headmost of the four ships, and most to leeward, also hauled all his courses and top-gallant sails, and used every method he could to bring up his van, that he might extricate his rear from the critical situation it was in, about five in the evening. But all the efforts he could make to get the wind of our rear were unavailing; for our van, quitting the two English ships, that were shattered, and utterly unrigged, might always have doubled upon M. Pocock to windward, which was the

the principal object, and the cause of the movement proposed.

The *Moras* being along side of us to leeward, we haled her to give us sea room to wear, and bring the wind on the other side of the ship; being very certain that the *St. Louis*, the *Duc d'Orleans*, and all the other ships, would successively do the same, as they probably waited only for our manœuvre. The movement was accordingly begun. In the mean while, the wind being astern, Count d'Aché thought it more adviseable to advance towards the *Comte de Provence*; which mistaking, unfortunately, our manœuvre, hauled up her main-sail; but she immediately unfurled it again when she understood our design, and came to us with all the sail she could crowd.

The *St. Louis* haled us during these transactions; and while the rear of the enemy was almost in our wake, and our van far advanced, M. de Joannis called out to the General, that he was ready to follow to begin the action again. M. de Surville began first to sail on the larboard tack, and we all thought to form our line with the *Duc d'Orleans*, now become our head ship, leaving the *Comte de Provence*, with her division, to close the line to leeward, as soon as we should have got close together, while our van was to keep close to the wind, to put the rear of the enemy between their fire and our's.

However this may be, while the squadron was making a little circuit in forming, the enemy, recovered from their first confusion, rallied, keeping close to the wind upon the opposite tack to our's; and unfortunately, night coming on, it was not possible to get sufficiently to windward to renew the action.

Before

Before night came on, the English tacked about, rather, as it should seem, with a view to keep the wind, than to venture another engagement; for, towards evening, Count d'Aché commanded all his lights of orders to be put out, and each vessel to light her poop lantern; while the English shewed no lights, lest we should discover their manœuvres. We observed the sails and rigging of the English to be much shattered; and the two ships of the van, which had been engaged by the *Vengeur* and the *Bien-aimé*, to be entirely disabled. One of them had her mizen top-sail mast quite down; and the other, her little top-gallant mast. One of these vessels, in particular, was carried to such a distance during the action, that coming up, as we did, after the action, she passed to windward of the English line, and lay-to to repair her damages.

The *Zodiaque*, which had suffered the most of our ships, was soon in a state to trim all her sails, and while all hands were at work in repairing their rigging, the Squadron being formed on the starboard tack, Count d'Aché ordered the *Diligente* to sail along the line, and give notice to the ships, that he intended to engage a second time. The junction of the *Comte de Provence* and the *Diligente* did in fact promise us the greatest advantages; but the English seemed to have no such intention; they remained masters of the wind, and continued to keep as close to it as possible, endeavouring to conceal their manœuvres from us.

The General thought of nothing else the whole night, but to ply to windward, or to anchor on the coast, if the currents and wind would not permit him to go farther to the southward. This last
scheme

scheme seemed to be most suitable, on account of the rapidity of the current; he therefore sent the *Diligente* a second time, to tell the Captain of the *Comte de Provence*, that he might make the signal for mooring when he thought proper.

At nine at night the *Comte de Provence* made the signal for anchoring, and we repeated it instantly, marking it as strongly as we could, that the ships might lose no time in seeing their anchors clear, and furling their sails.

We anchored in nine fathom water, and observed all the ships successively doing the same. The Squadron was placed very advantageously, and not far from Pondicherry; but at day-break we had the fatal sight of the *Bien-aimé* driven ashore. That vessel had lost two anchors in the engagement, and, by a singular fatality, the *Duc de Bourgogne*, whose conduct had been so shameful during the action, passed her keel over the last cable she had left, and cut it. The gale, which was very strong, drove her ashore; she dropt a small anchor which she had on board, but it could not withstand the current. The Captain wished to get under sail, but his sails and rigging were so torn in the action that they could be of no use to him. Finally, M. Bouvet, after having fought so well, and performed all the duties of a brave and excellent officer, had the misfortune to lose his ship. The masts were all cut away, and Count d'Aché having sent to know the condition of the ship, was informed, that she was past recovery. Every disposition was made to save the men, ammunition, and effects, and M. Bouvet remained on board to discharge this duty with regard to his crew, while Messrs. Landivizian and the Chevalier Crillon, who
during

during the action had shewed a good example to the troops, conducted them to Pondicherry.

The same day we received intelligence of the English fleet. They took the advantage of the obscurity of the night and a fair wind to carry them to Coblere, where they were well situated to receive every succour they stood in need of from Madrafs, which is only three leagues distant from that factory. Count d'Aché was not in a condition to follow them so far, for the most he expected was to have water and provision enough to carry him to the road of Pondicherry. Some of the vessels were entirely destitute of these articles, and such was our distress, that, beside a great number of wounded, we had also a considerable quantity of sick, and especially of scorbutic persons, who required speedy relief; to these reasons we may add the necessity of landing the troops and ammunition, and returning to Fort St. David, which was vigorously attacked by M. de Lally. We therefore put again to sea to ply still to windward. The winds and currents were so contrary, that we sometimes lost ground instead of gaining it, and it was only by incredible labours that the fleet arrived at length in the road of Pondicherry, where it anchored on the 3d of May, after a navigation of a hundred days, and a very warm engagement.

A list of officers killed and wounded in the action of the 29th of April, 1758, belonging to the King's ship the Zodiaque.

Messrs. the Chevalier de la Bourdonnaye, Duplessis, Pascau, d'Hercé, killed.

Messrs. the Count d'Aché, Gotthó, de Senneville, senior,

senior, de Senneville, junior, de Gressigny, de Minthier, and du Pouet, wounded.

Forty men killed in the engagement, 35 who died of their wounds, and 150 wounded.

Seventeen shots between wind and water.

In landing the troops and passengers, who contributed to strengthen our ships, we had more than 1200 wounded or sick to land, and, our crew being obliged to work hard in unlading the ships, were so exhausted that the number of sick was daily increasing.

M. Pocock being well informed of our condition, and willing to avail himself of the accidental loss of the *Bien-aimé*, after having drawn all the succours he required for his fleet from Madras, set out on the 10th of May to make another attempt to relieve Fort St. David. This movement of the enemy made us press for supplies for the fleet; but there being no possibility of obtaining them at present, it was resolved in a mixt Council, that the fleet should moor in a line of battle, till it was supplied with water, provisions, ballast, &c. which many ships were in want of, and till it should be in a state to attack the enemy again. The frigates only were employed to convey ammunition to the siege, which our troops carried on very vigorously, notwithstanding the continual fire of the garrison, which was reinforced by the crew of the two frigates we had burnt on the 28th of April.

On the 26th of May the English fleet appeared before Emparvé, which they could not have gained by beating in the offing, and seemed to regulate their manœuvres as if their intention had been to ascend the coast without losing sight of it. They had two fire-ships

fire-ships along with them; and, our position not permitting us to put to sea for want of men, M. Pocock might have attacked us at anchor with great advantage, and at the same time might have impeded the success of M. de Lally.

We lost not a moment's time in collecting the men who were able to come on board, and in disposing every thing for the defence of the ships. In the mean time, Count d'Aché still thinking it better to stop the career of the English fleet by offering battle, a mixed Council was summoned, in which it was resolved that the Chevalier de Monteil and Messrs. de Palliere and de Surville, Captains, should be sent immediately to M. de Lally, to inform him of the ill consequences that might attend the waiting for the enemy, and the great advantages that would accrue to us from sailing out to meet them, if we could be reinforced so as to enable us to preserve the advantage of the wind to fight the enemy a second time.

The enemy advanced daily, and appeared the next day in sight of Pondicherry. In consequence of representations made to M. de Lally, that General came to Pondicherry, followed by 340 European soldiers, and from 3 to 400 seapoys. Count d'Aché, after receiving this reinforcement, gave orders for sailing, and, having observed the enemy getting under sail opposite the fort, he made a signal to put immediately to sea, and to form the line.

It was at this time that the General, desirous of bestowing upon the Officers of his ship some mark of his approbation of their conduct, gave his Lieutenants commissions of Captains, his Sub-lieutenants commissions of Lieutenants, and each of his Midshipmen a commission of Sub-lieutenancy. The
English

English fleet seemed at first resolved to risk a second engagement ; but after a little time, instead of sailing near the land, by the help of a sea breeze, it continued on the same tack, and disappeared. Our squadron went to anchor in a line before Goudelour, and, the place having no further hopes of relief, surrendered to the King's arms on the 2d of June 1758.

M.de Lally marched, immediately after the surrender, to Devi-cottah, to drive the English from thence. On the approach of our troops, Count d'Aché, in order to employ the fleet in the business that seemed to him most important, resolved to cruise about the places where vessels commonly put in, either to collect whatever succour might be sent to us, or to intercept those that might be sent to the enemy ; or, finally, to make a display of our forces before the people of Tanjour, whom the English endeavoured to prepossess against us. The *Sylphide*, whose crew was distributed among the ships, and had only been able to get the Lascaris in lieu of them, joined us on the coast, after taking in tow an English vessel opposite Negapatnam, which we sent immediately to Pondicherry, under the command of M. de Minthier, who, although dangerously wounded in the engagement, and not recovered, yet, to shew his zeal, ventured again on board ; but his wounds growing worse, he was obliged to return to Pondicherry to be cured.

A few days after this, M. d'Aché received a letter from the Council of Pondicherry, inviting him to come there with his fleet, his presence being necessary while the King's troops were employed in the war of Tanjour, from whence we expected to draw all the sums required for an expedition against Ma-
drass,

dras, we arrived in that road on the 17th of June, and began immediately to supply the ships, and put them in a situation to co-operate with the land forces.

While we remained at Pondicherry, without being able, however, to provide all the necessaries for the fleet, on account of the want of resources, the English, receiving larger supplies from their colonies, refitted themselves at Madras; and, after having reinforced themselves with the crews of the three ships, that had passed by Caricalle a few days after we quitted our cruise, M. Pocock, being informed of the resistance made by the King of Tanjour, and presuming that our fleet, destitute of men, would become an easy conquest while we lay at anchor, resolved to ascend the coast to come up to us.

Count d'Aché only received intelligence of this at the time that the rudders of most of our ships were ashore; and the day after, on the 27th of July, the English fleet was discovered advancing very fast, while our fleet had not yet taken every necessary on board. We worked night and day, and disposed our ships in order of battle in the road, because there was no appearance of our being able to meet the enemy before they came up with us. The wind, however, failed them in such a manner, that, after putting about towards Pondicherry, they were obliged to anchor in the rear of our ships to leeward.

By this time, having assembled all our convalescents, and taken out the greatest part of our crews belonging to the two frigates, by this little reinforcement it appeared that the fleet would really be in a condition to fight: accordingly, though it was a very different thing to sustain an action while we were moored,

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moored, or in open sea, on account of the number of hands necessary for working the ships, yet, weighing the inconveniences attending the first with the advantages belonging to the last position, Count d'Aché determined upon this, and, having sent the Chevalier de Monteil to declare his resolutions to the Council, we immediately prepared to put to sea, and even wore upon our anchors with so much dispatch, that we sailed as soon as the Major of the fleet returned, and formed ourselves in a line of battle.

The English got under sail at six in the morning, proceeded in the same order, but crowded all their sails, in hopes of getting to windward of us. At two o'clock they changed their course, and we did the same shortly after, to avail ourselves of the land breeze, drawing near to the shore, and afterwards putting out further to sea. It appeared, that we might cruise to windward of the enemy, for the first of their ships, at the approach of the *Comte de Provence*, clued up her sails, and did not hesitate to wait for her company. At this time, as the night came on, we had a violent squall from the N. W. which carried us to the South $\frac{1}{2}$ S. W. We then flattered ourselves that we should still preserve the wind, and be sufficiently advanced, the day following, to the southward, to moor at Pondicherry after the engagement.

The enemy were not so fortunate as we were, for they could not be discovered otherwise than from the mast-heads, and too late to make it possible to engage the action. We therefore continued to keep as close to the wind as possible, in managing our tacks, for it was probable that the English would avail themselves of the first westerly wind which might blow in the night, to carry them towards the

land, and to the southward of us. Besides, as the object of the Tanjour war seemed very interesting to M. Pocock, it was of importance to the nation that our fleet should appear on their coasts, before the inhabitants should know any thing of their allies. We manœuvred, therefore, still ascending the coast, and keeping a continual look out for the English, till we anchored in sight of Tranquebar, at the beginning of the night, and continued there till morning.

On the 30th of July, after having plyed to windward, without discovering any thing of the enemy's fleet, we cast anchor before Caricalle, from whence we set sail again as soon as the land breeze began to blow, and continued to keep still as close to the wind as possible, because, having heard nothing certain in our factory of the position of M. Pocock, there was reason to think that he endeavoured to sail between Ceylon and Negapatnam, in order to get to the windward of us.

On the 31st of July, as we passed along the coast in a line, we suffered ourselves to be chased by two ships to the windward of Negapatnam, which the *Diligente* discovered to be Dutch; and at night, having veered towards land, without getting any intelligence of the enemy, Count d'Aché ordered us to steer for Caricalle, that we might at length gain some information of the position of the English fleet; but having learnt nothing, and some persons thinking that M. Pocock might have taken the resolution to molest Fort St. David, or cause some diversion to the troops, it was immediately resolved upon to go and force him to an engagement.

On the 1st of August, having placed all our ships in

in a line, we sailed along the coast, and about nine o'clock in the morning the *Diligente* made a signal of her seeing the English fleet. It had sailed from Devittottah, and, forming a line on the larboard tack, the wind southerly, seemed to expect us. We observed, however, that the English bore off to sea, which might possibly retard the engagement; as to us, our line being soon formed parallel to that of the enemy, M. d'Aché ordered the signal to be made to bear down. At the same instant each vessel advanced towards the ship that was opposite to her; while we steered right upon the Yarmouth, placed, as we were, in the center of the squadron; which consisted of seven large ships, a fire-ship, and a frigate to repeat the signals.

The two fleets, however, were not within reach of each other till about five in the evening, because the gale, S. $\frac{1}{2}$ S. E. was rather weak; but it soon increased considerably, and the sea running high, many of our ships were obliged to shut their lower port-holes. The *St. Louis*, in haste to communicate this important observation, hailed us, and desired the General to take notice that she could not employ her battery. This determined us to keep close to the wind, and renounce the design of advancing on the enemy.

They did not avail themselves of our situation, but, neglecting to begin an action, which they thought, without doubt, we declined only because night was at hand, the English appeared rather anxious to get to windward of us: but as we observed their motions with the greatest accuracy, we sailed exactly as they did, letting them know, by this manœuvre, that we waited only for the morning to begin the fight. When we changed our course towards the land, we

made our signals by firing of our guns, our poop lanterns were kept lighted, and we sailed in a line of battle to the windward of them.

We perceived, in the mean time, that the enemy had placed the *Cumberland* after the *Salisbury*, which followed the *Elizabeth*, and that these ships formed their van. Instead, therefore, of leaving the *Moras* between the *Comte de Provence* and the *Duc d'Orleans*, in the van, we made the *Duc de Bourgogne* come into her station in the night, and ordered both ships to change their broad pendants, that if we could attack the enemy at break of day, they being deceived at first sight, might not have time to alter their disposition; and consequently the *Moras* and the *Condé*, supported by the *Vengeur*, were to endeavour to break or destroy the *Newcastle* and the *Weymouth*, which composed the rear of the English fleet.

On the 2d in the morning we did not see the English again, who had continued to sail in the offing: it was thought that they were discerned, in the course of the day, towards the N. E.; and, as M. d'Aché had occasion to consult with his Captains, he ordered us to steer for Caricalle.

The subject of the consultation, at which all the Captains and Officers of the fleet were present, was the bad state of the batteries of the ships of the Company. The General having concluded that we should leave the advantage of the wind to the enemy, provided the sea were rough, it was proposed, in this case, to execute a manœuvre, which had been already mentioned the day before.

When we were obliged to suspend the attack, we entered into all the details of the project. It was agreed upon, that, in a similar situation, our fleet,

feigning to run along side the enemy, should insensibly bear down, each ship falling into the wake of the other, and keeping very close together. The *Comte de Provence* should then come up to the last ship of the enemy, within pistol-shot, and all the other ships, following exactly her manœuvre, should each pour their broadside point blank along the whole of the English line, and that afterwards, continuing their course on the same tack, they should form the line within half a league of the English fleet to leeward, after having cut off two of their frigates, and probably disabled one of their ships.

Each Captain being thus instructed in his manœuvre, a fuller explanation of the affair was given to M. de la Chaise, who was most likely to contribute to the success of it, as he was then to receive a signal for the moment in which it was to be executed.

We designed to be under sail before break of day, on account of the enemy, when at one o'clock we heard their signal guns firing, and their lights, which they put up, veering by the land breeze to run along the coast.

On the 3d of August we set sail ourselves upon the same tack; and the *Diligente*, with which our ships formed the line, as we proceeded, put us in a situation to be able to engage the enemy before the breeze increased.

Thus we waited with impatience the break of day. As soon as it appeared, the English began their manœuvres with dispatch: at the same time we made the signal to bear down in line of battle, and a gun was fired upon hoisting the King's flag. The ships all observed the best order, and each

seemed to vie with the other in approaching the enemy; who were obliged to give way all together, to form their line, and seemed disconcerted at seeing us advance with so much resolution. While they were preparing to receive us, the cry of *Vive le Roy* resounded from one end of our line to the other; but, unfortunately, as the wind increased, the *St. Louis* hailed us again, to inform us, that neither she, nor several other of the Company's ships, could make any use of their lower guns.

We were then opposite to Negapatnam, within a little distance from the road, and, by the regular change of the wind, we could not stay to observe the enemy longer than twelve o'clock, at which time Admiral Pocock was expected to come down to give us battle, having the advantage of the sea breeze over us. The engagement being therefore unavoidable, it was again proposed to put the project, which was talked of the preceding night, into immediate execution; and, beside the reasons which already justified this idea, there was this additional one, that we might afterwards be able to recover the wind again, by sailing to the S. E. while the land breeze continued, after having canonaded the enemy's line, and cut off their two frigates. We were in this state at six o'clock in the morning, the enemy sailing to the southward, with a fresh breeze from the west, and we also ranging the coast to bear down, after we discovered the fatal loss of our batteries. This interval was taken up in consulting about the movement proposed, and M. d'Aché was desirous of having the decisive opinion of the Captains upon it. At length the *Diligente* returning, and perceiving that the time was passing, which should be employed in executing a manœuvre

which nothing but a calm could hinder from being decisive, the signal agreed upon was made. M. de la Chaise began immediately to direct the manœuvre; and each ship following the example of the *Comte de Provence*, the whole fleet advanced in the order most proper for our design, so as to conceal it from the enemy, who seemed unable to comprehend it, till it was out of their power to prevent it. Accordingly, about 10 o'clock, we were in a very advantageous situation: the English had not thought proper to make their van bear down, that they might all come on together, as we did; and, judging afterwards that this movement would not be a sufficient resource to them, they contented themselves with closing their rear as near as possible.

When they saw that we were advancing near their rear, knowing that we should be within reach to destroy the last of their ships, and cut off their frigates, they successively made several different manœuvres. Some bore away with their forefalls, others tacked about, and, assisted by their boats, endeavoured to keep themselves N. and S.; while we, still sailing in the offing, E. and E. keeping our bowsprit towards the poop of the last of their ships, steered so that we might be able to destroy it, and separate, at the same time, the two frigates from the rest of the enemy's fleet. These frigates had no less than five row-boats to tow them up, but finding that all their endeavours could not enable them to gain their stations, they quitted the fleet entirely; but though they crowded all their sails, yet the *Diligente*, which was just preparing to follow them, could have overtaken them, and obliged them to bring to, under the fire of one of our ships.

The nearer we approached the rear of the enemy, the more their confusion appeared. M. Pocock was making signals continually, and the last ship, more anxious than any other, on account of her situation, was edging further to leeward, to avoid receiving all our shots in her stern, her Captain not considering that her danger was thereby increased, inasmuch as the Squadron could not venture to break the line, nor change even to the general tack, and therefore remained under their two topsails, in an ill-formed line.

In this manner the King's Squadron would inevitably have obtained the first advantage, and would afterwards have been ready to engage a general action with the six remaining ships of M. Pocock's fleet, between the two breezes. We saw no obstacle to our design on the part of the enemy; for such was already their confusion, that M. Pocock himself ran foul of one of his ships, while we were constantly in pursuit of our object. The *Comte de Provence* was just ready to pour in her broadside, when the wind, which already began to abate, became perfectly calm, and was succeeded by a sea breeze.

This revolution happening sooner than we had reason to fear, or the enemy to expect, put us in the same situation we were in before. M. de la Chaize, even before we made the signal, was only intent upon manœuvring according to circumstances; and, as the enemy had the advantage of the wind, which we were obliged to give up to them, it was their business to avail themselves of it, while we expected them with firmness, our line being well formed.

M. Pocock, was some time employed in disengaging his ships; at length, about noon, he placed the
Elizabeth,

Elizabeth, *Salisbury*, and *Cumberland* in the van, followed by the *Weymouth*, *Newcastle*, and *Tyger*, and then made a signal to bear down upon us. His van not observing strictly the order of sailing of the other ships, the *Elizabeth* came very near the *Comte de Provence*, while the *Tarmouth* was still at a distance from us, and the enemy's rear was not yet within reach of our's. Our General waited for M. Pocock, to induce him the more to run along his line. We made a signal to our van to brail their sails, and we put our top-sail aback, as soon as we saw the *Elizabeth* along side of the *Comte de Provence*.

When the *Elizabeth* was within pistol-shot, she brought to; and M. de la Chaise, who always displayed as much bravery as skill in his manœuvres, brought to likewise, to be under her fire: at this instant we hoisted our signal for action, and she discharged a full broadside, and received, at the same time, one from the enemy.

The *Duc d'Orleans* and the *Duc de Bourgogne* fired at the other ships, but we were desirous to reserve our fire for the *Tarmouth*, when the *Cumberland*, which sailed before her, fired a broadside at us, which was immediately returned. The *St. Louis* attacked the Admiral in the same instant, which fired before she could come along side of us; the two ships of the rear fired likewise, but they were rather at too great a distance.

Thus the engagement began with a very promising aspect, for the *Elizabeth* had her mizen-top-mast shot off; and the *Comte de Provence* seemed to promise us greater advantages, when, in the midst of the smoke raised by their continual firing, we saw her mizen-mast on fire: this accident was occasioned by
some

some combustibles thrown in by the enemy; but it was so much the more terrible, as she engaged within pistol-shot. Mr. Bouvet, her next neighbour, soon relieved her; for, as she was endeavouring to withdraw, in order to extinguish her fire, he stepped between, and engaged Captain Stevens, in M. de la Chaise's place. The *Duc d'Orleans* received also part of her fire, in order to keep the *Salisbury* employed; and, firing alternately at the *Cumberland* and the Admiral's ship, we continued the fight, which was exceedingly animated on both sides, and very bloody. The wheel of our helm was carried away at the beginning of the action, and, 'till that was repaired, we could not direct our fire properly, though we were incessantly receiving that of the *Cumberland* and the Admiral. Besides, we had scarce fixed on a second wheel, when a fire, which caught in the hold, threw us in the greatest panic, exposing us to the danger of being blown up. This disaster was soon removed; but a little time after, the tranform being detached by the canon of the *St. Barbe*, which burst in firing, it hindered the tiller from working, so that we could not come to windward so much as we wished, to be opposite to the Admiral, who being placed upon our quarter, incommoded us greatly; and he could only be driven away by the *St. Louis*; however, we cut away the yard of his main-top-sail, and never ceased firing, whenever we could discern him.

As soon as we were able to steer, we endeavoured to come near the *Duc de Bourgogne*, who, in keeping her station, was obliged to sustain a very obstinate fight with the enemy's van; and for this purpose, we ourselves wished to pass to windward of the *Duc d'Orleans*; but while we advanced; and that that ship was

was bracing her sails, in order to favour our design, the tiller rope of our second wheel was carried away, in the midst of the continual volley of shot, which damaged our rigging considerably. Finally, we found ourselves forced, for want of a helm, to run foul of M. de Surville. Fortunately, the English could not reap any advantage from this accident, in which we were exposed to every misfortune, if they had sent a fire-ship against the *Zodiaque*; we had only the same space to engage them in, and, the *Duc d'Orleans*, as well as we, having worked with incredible dispatch and ardour, we were soon disengaged, and M. de Surville beginning to fire again, the *Duc de Bourgogne* had time to recover her station, while she continued the fight.

The *Vengeur*, which closed our line, came the nearest to us, and we observed that she always kept up a prodigious fire; in a word, notwithstanding our losses, we were in hopes that the *Comte de Provence* would come up to us again, when the *Moras* and the *Candé* also quitted the line about four o'clock, after having suffered much.

After this, we prepared the signal for all to wear at the same time, the wind right aft, continuing still the engagement, while we drew near to the *Comte de Provence*, which was labouring incessantly to repair, but was not in a condition to resume her station, though fortunate in having escaped blowing up. Besides, she must necessarily do this with greater ease, when the fleet had made another tack; we therefore made the signal for veering hard a weather, with that of the line of battle, sailing on the larboard tack, observing ourselves, to tack the last, in order to favour the execution of this movement.

The *Vengeur*, which not only supplied very well the

the place of the *Moras* and the *Condé*, but which had also taken care to prolong her course, while she kept up an incessant fire, contributed greatly to the success of this manœuvre. The squadron was therefore soon in an advantageous position; for the new line of battle was formed with the two smallest vessels before, and the *Vengeur* and ourselves in the rear.

The English, whose line was also disordered, far from closing with us, when we tacked to rally the *Moras* and the *Condé*, only veered by a kind of general tack, which increased the distance between the two squadrons. Two of their ships persisted only in firing at the *Zodiaque*; which discharged her fire from both tiers at the same time, and held her side up to the whole English fleet, in order to save two of our vessels, whose rigging was entirely destroyed, and were consequently unable to work. This manœuvre had the desired effect, for these vessels, having hoisted all the sails they could rig, extricated themselves from the disagreeable situation they were in. Count d'Aché then finding himself beset with five vessels, determined to wear hard a weather; and, the *Vengeur* coming close upon us, we stood off to sea, in order to rally our ships that were far ahead. Admiral Pocock's ship lay a considerable way aft, and entirely disabled; the *Elizabeth* and *Newcastle* only advanced towards us, though very slowly.

A little after this, the *Comte de Provence*, having cut away her mizen-mast, came to join us, in order to strengthen our rear; and M. Pocock, who had had so much good fortune that day, and whose fleet was in far better condition than our's, instead of renewing the fight, made a signal for his ships to sail close hauled. We made no alteration in our manœuvres, the *Diligente* had been sent to desire all our vessels to
sail

sail in order, and to repair as fast as they could. We still kept up the signal for battle, sailing on the larboard tack; nevertheless, seeing the necessity there was for repairing our ships, we steered for Pondicherry.

The day following, being the 4th of August, we arrived there, and anchored in a line before it. The Admiral then sent the Chevalier de Monteil into the city, and commanded him, as he passed, to inform M. de la Chaise how much he was satisfied with his conduct, and to express the same sentiments to the other Captains; but that, being convinced, from their want of men, of rigging, and ammunition, and, above all, as he could not flatter himself, on account of the bad state of most of the ship's guns, that he should be able to decide the affair by attacking the enemy again, he therefore resolved to anchor near the place; moreover, the magazines being totally unprovided, and seeing that the repairing of the ships became so much the more difficult, as the colony was in want of the first materials; and as the army, obliged to abandon the siege of Tanjour, far from bringing the advantages that were expected from that enterprize, would, on the contrary, soon increase the difficulty of our subsistence;—for these reasons, Count d'Aché determined to depart as soon as possible.

A list of the King's Officers killed and wounded.

Lieutenant Duffeais, M. de Senneville,	} killed.
and M. de Minthier,	
Count d'Aché, Messrs. Beaudran, d'Aché,	} wounded.
Genlis, and Tremizoi,	

25 men killed upon the spot, and thrown into the sea during the action, 40 dead of their wounds, 150 wounded.

The

The English having gone to repair between Caricalle and Negapatnam, and seeking succour from that factory, one of their frigates seized a brigantine of ours, which was sent from the Isle of France, and to which the Dutch had the weakness to refuse protection. Fortunately, at the time that this news was brought to us, we also received intelligence of a ship belonging to the Dutch Company passing in sight of Pondicherry. The *Diligente* was dispatched after her, and brought her into the road; and it was resolved that she should be kept there till the Dutch had given satisfaction for the damage done. This vessel had a great quantity of rigging and provisions on board, which were so much the more valuable to us, as we were in such extreme want of them. On the 24th of August, the English fleet having set sail from some place adjacent to Negapatnam, seemed inclined to return to us; but it did not proceed further than the height of Fort St. David. We had received certain intelligence of the secret design of M. Pocock, who had prepared five fire-ships to attack us at anchor. The want of rigging and provisions, which would put the King's fleet in the most critical situation, if it were obliged to engage the enemy a third time, determined Count d'Aché to set off for the Isle of France; and, having informed M. de Lally, and the Council, of his intention, we sailed from Pondicherry the 3d of September, and, after a most fortunate passage, arrived on the 13th of October at Mauritius.

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